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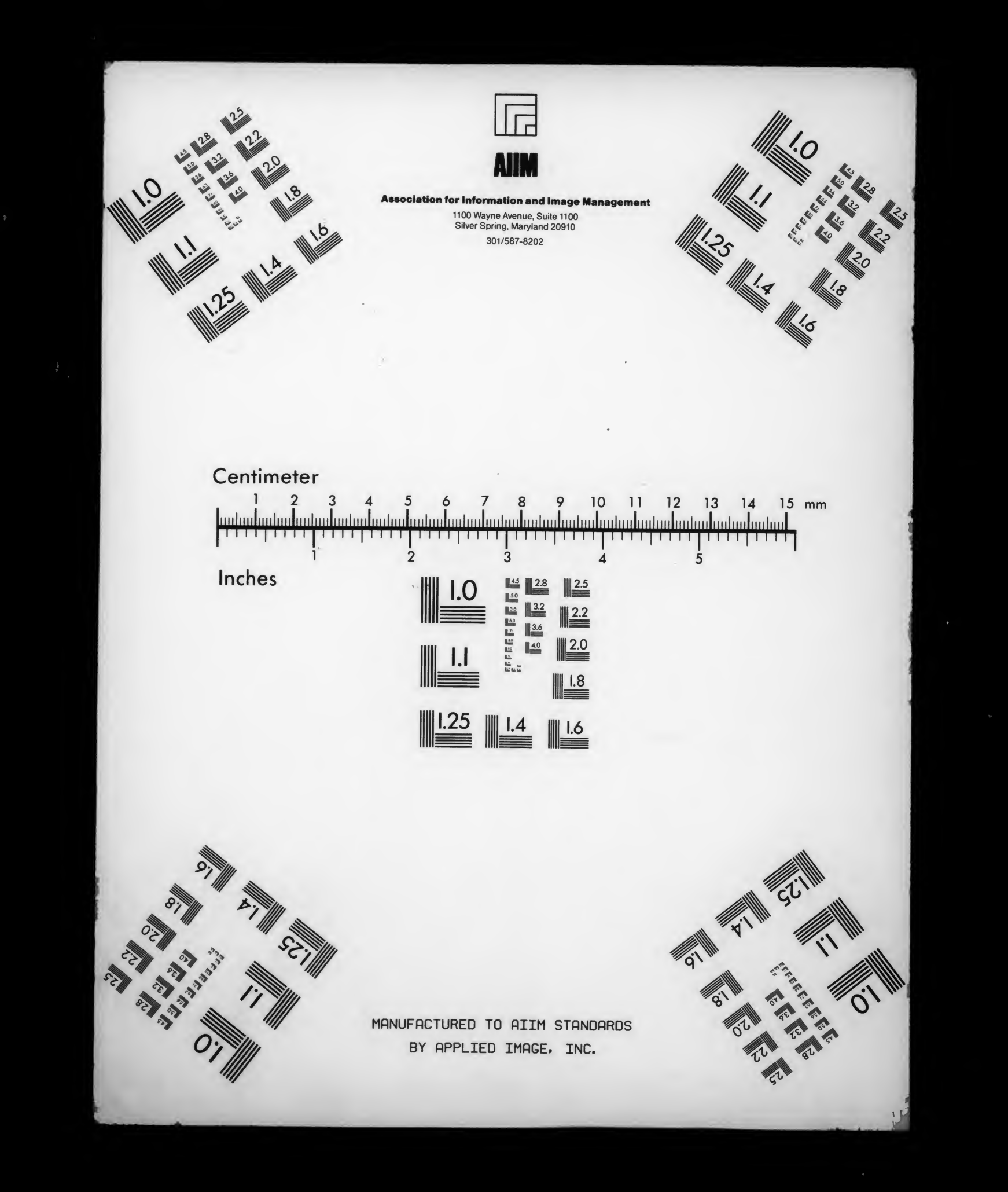
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JULIAN
THE APOSTATE

By

W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON

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JULIAN THE APOSTATE

PLATE I.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

The Acerenza bust: see pp. 4, 27, 93; also S. Reinach in *Revue Archéologique*, 3rd series, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 337-59, and G. Negri, *Julian the Apostate*, Eng. transl., Vol. I, pp. xxvii-xxxiv.

The bust is in marble and of life size.

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JULIAN THE APOSTATE

BY

W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON

M.A., D.LITT., F.S.A.SCOT.

LIBRARIAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Imperatorem esse fortunae est: agendum vero, ut sint imperio digni quos ad regendi necessitatem vis fatalis adduxerit

—Constantine the Great

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PREFACE.

WITH the exception of Miss Alice Gardner's volume in the *Heroes of the Nations* series, published in 1895, no book has hitherto existed in English giving within brief compass an account of Julian in all his varied aspects and in relation to his times. The English translation of Gaetano Negri's work appeared in 1905, but this is on a larger scale, and is concerned with Julian the philosopher and the anti-Christian protagonist rather than with the statesman, the administrator and the warrior.

My own aim has been to present, in as compact a form as possible, a *coup d'œil* of one of the most remarkable personalities and one of the most extraordinary careers in the whole range of history. Some students of Julian's character have seen in it a baffling dualism which I hold to be no more than a surface appearance. Others have stressed the view that despite all his outward acuteness and abilities the Apostate was at bottom nothing but a blind and obstinate reactionary. Such an idea seems to me to be equally at variance with the true facts of the case. We cannot draw a forced and unnatural antithesis between Julian's obviously highly efficient grasp of the needs of his time, so far as the reorganisation and defence of the Roman Empire were concerned, and what on the surface appears to be the profound folly of his hostile attitude towards Christianity. In the following pages I have endeavoured to show how, in my opinion, the apparent discord can be resolved; and to demonstrate that Julian's outlook, however utterly it may have been falsified by subsequent history, was in itself a reasonable and, indeed, an inevitable one for a man of his upbringing, prepossessions and sympathies.

In quoting from Julian's writings I have in general followed the excellent versions of W. C. Wright, in the Loeb Classical Library; but I have exercised freedom in sometimes modifying or condensing them to suit my own purposes. A similar procedure has been adopted in the translations of passages from the *Funeral Oration* of Libanius and from Gregory's two *Invectives*, as rendered by C. W. King, *Julian the*

Emperor (Bohn's Libraries). I offer no apology for my use of the translations of Ammian and Socrates by Philemon Holland and Meredith Hanmer respectively. Our great Elizabethan versions of the classics are far too little read nowadays: and in the case of Ammian, Holland's is the only English rendering possible to use—that of C. D. Yonge in Bohn's Libraries being very poor. All students of the period await with eager interest the translation long promised by Mr. Norman H. Baynes.

The pleasure which I have given myself by dedicating this little book to my old classical master has been much enhanced by his kindness in reading through the proofs.

W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON.

KING'S COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN,
May, 1930.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Plate I—Julian the Apostate: the Acerenza bust - - *Frontispiece*

" II—Constantius II - - - - - - - *facing p.* 18

" III—Portrait of Julian from a gold *solidus* - - " 57

" IV—Constantine the Great - - - - " 103

" V—Map of the environs of Ctesiphon - - " 115

The medallion vignette on the title page is reproduced from *Chronicum Abbatis Uspergensis*, printed by Crato Mylius at Strasbourg in 1540, p. LXXXIX.

In solchen Uebergangsperioden, welche eine neue Zeit ausgebären, fehlt es nimmer an mächtigen Charakteren, die wie leuchtende Meteore den Glanz der Vergangenheit noch einmal flüchtig wiederspiegeln.

—Joseph von Eichendorff: *Die Wiederherstellung des Schlosses der Deutschen Ordensritter zu Marienburg*, ed. 1922, p. 47.

Equidem beatos puto, quibus Deorum munere datum est aut facere scribenda aut scribere legenda; beatissimos vero, quibus utrumque.

—Pliny to Tacitus (*Letters*, Bk. VI, No. xvi).

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

I.

Hoc actum est tantis successibus atque triumphis
Romani imperii; Christo iam tunc venienti,
Crede, parata via est, quam dudum publica nostrae
Pacis amicitia struxit moderamine Romae.

—Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, Bk. II, vv. 619-22.

The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving:
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

—Milton, *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, vv. 173-80.

IN the fourth century of the Christian era, the mighty fabric of the Roman Empire still stood in all the unimpaired magnificence of outward splendour. The tidal inrush of northern barbarism that broke up the "immense majesty of the Roman Peace," and submerged the somnolent prosperity of the Antonine period, had been stemmed by the valour and the hard tenacity of Aurelian. The whole machinery of administration had been refashioned by the organising genius of Diocletian and Constantine. Above all, the long threatened financial collapse of the Empire had been averted, and by drastic measures the currency had been restored. Rome herself, occupying a geographical position inconvenient for an Emperor facing the constantly flaring-up German peril on the northern frontiers, and the more smouldering menace of the Sassanid kingdom of Persia in the east, had for many years ceased to be an Imperial residence. Diocletian

dwelt normally at Nicomedia; and in 330 Constantine fixed his new capital at the queenly city on the Bosporus that evermore would bear his name.

What was of supreme importance was not so much that Constantine planted a new capital, as that he planted it where he did. Throughout the past hundred years, or more, the centre of gravity in the Mediterranean world had been shifting to the east; and the foundation of Constantinople in one sense merely implied official recognition of the fact. But in its selection considerations of crucial importance for the whole future of mankind were involved. Septimius Severus, who in ruthless pique had sacrificed the mural defences of Byzantium as an offering to that capacity for gloomy hatred which was part and parcel of his Punic nature, had cast aside the very gorget from the panoply of the Roman Empire. The magnitude of his error was fully revealed during the great Gothic invasions in the middle decades of the third century—invasions which bid fair to sever the Empire's jugular vein. We can scarcely doubt that the lesson of those disastrous years had not been wasted upon the acute perception of Constantine. His new Imperial city, occupying a post of unrivalled strength on the bridge betwixt east and west, now formed a centre where the two currents of tradition in the Roman Empire, the Latin and the Hellenistic, might blend, each drawing new vitality and support from the other. And so, while in the west the Empire and its civilisation went down before the Goths and Franks, in the east it kept the torch bravely burning for another thousand years. Here in the City of Constantine Roman law and administration, above all the grand Roman ideal of ordered sovereignty—

"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Parcere subiectis, et debellare superbos"—

merged with the old Greek literary and intellectual achievement: here the old Greek metaphysical mind was quickened into fresh activity by the spirit of the new religion, which also was a gift of Constantine to the city of his foundation. We have long passed the day when the so-called "Byzantine" Empire was regarded as synonymous with dreariness and sterility. Every sound historian now freely admits the extraordinary vigour and abiding value of East Roman civilisation,

and pays ungrudging tribute to the noble work which the Eastern Empire accomplished in guarding what remained of the old Graeco-Roman culture through the Dark Ages until the young nations of the western world were mature enough to assimilate it. But we must not forget that the East Roman Empire, and all that it has meant to mankind, was the creation of Constantine. From first to last, amid every vicissitude, its heart beat strong within the triple walls of Constantinople.

In the third century, the chronic seditions of a half-barbaric soldiery had brought the State to the brink of ruin. Under the Constantinian[1] reorganisation this peril was overcome by the separation of military and civil power in the provinces, and by a systematic scaling down of army and administrative units. As a result of these combined processes a huge bureaucratic structure was built up, which lifted the Emperors on to a height of unapproachable aloofness, removing them from familiar and dangerous contact with their troops or subjects. The *Imperator* or commander in the field, the *Princeps* or first servant of the State, is now transformed into a *Sanctissimus Augustus*, a Βασιλεύς or Αὐτοκράτωρ as he was styled in the east—a Sultan cloistered from the vulgar gaze by all the elaborate and servile pomp of an oriental court. The *res publica* has now become a *regnum*. Under the fully organised hierarchy, the Empire was grouped in four great prefectures, each of which fell into a number of dioceses, subdivided in their turn into provinces. Over each diocese was placed a vicar, while the provinces were governed usually by rectors. These administrative designations were afterwards taken over by the Christian Church, reproducing the organisation of the Empire in which she grew up. The army was broken up into two main categories, the frontier garrisons, a territorial militia which always remained in fixed location, and the "palatine" troops, who may be described as the field armies. This was a most important and salutary reform: for the early military organisation of the Empire, broadly speaking, had been one of frontier defence pure and simple, whereas now the vastly increased penetrative

[1] I use this term broadly, for it is now well established that many of the changes which mark the administration of the Empire in the fourth century were effected by Diocletian. Some of them would appear even to date back to Aurelian.

power of the so-called "barbarians" rendered absolutely necessary the creation of a powerful and mobile mass of manœuvre or striking force, ready to deal at any point with invading hordes which had broken through the frontier lines. Thus was established a kind of "enlarged prætorian guard,"[1] wholly in the Emperor's hands, and able to be used at once against internal no less than external foes. The strength of the legions was reduced for the most part from the old 6,000 to about 1,000 men; and cavalry—particularly the heavy troopers known as *cataphracts*—began by degrees to assume that pre-eminence in warfare which this arm was to enjoy throughout the Middle Ages.

Everywhere, and in all departments of State, the cunning opportunism which had marked the early Principate, in its dealings with its subjects, tended to harden into a rigid despotic uniformity of administrative practice. And what has been said about administration is equally true in all aspects of this strange fourth century society. It was pre-eminently the age of crystallisation. In the realm of thought, Christianity was stiffening into inelastic dogma, Neoplatonism into the cast-iron procedure of thaumaturgic rite. Under the tyranny of the masters of rhetoric, literature was similarly crystallising into set forms, from which even a Julian and a Synesius cannot wholly extricate themselves. The purely crystalline character of art during this period, and particularly of portrait sculpture—in which a dignified but frigid formalism has replaced the powerful if coarse reality of the third century craftsmen[2]—illustrates in this aspect also the prevailing tendency. Precisely the same characteristic meets us in the Imperial profiles on the coinage and medallions of the fourth century: the upturned gaze, the fixed stare, the stiff conventionality shown in the crimped hair and the folds of the mantle.[3] The growing fondness for mosaic as a form of pictorial art also indicates the general trend. In building, it expresses itself in the subordination of plan to the requirements of a rigid external *façade*, producing an architecture scenic rather than organic in quality — an architecture often of high dignity and great

[1]M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, p. 457.

[2]The head of Constantius II, figured at Plate II, is an excellent case in point: the Acerenza bust of Julian (see Frontispiece) is the exception which proves the rule.

[3]See the *solidus* of Julian figured at Plate III.

beauty, but standing in the rear not the front of tectonic development. Only in the evolution of the Christian *basilica* can we say that vital progress is still found. In a similar way, social grades were setting into castes; while both among Christians and pagans a hard line of cleavage, unknown to the ancient world, was dividing the churchman from the layman, and the regular from the secular clergy. Sectarian distinctions and loyalties of cult show the same tendency to stiffen and sharpen among pagans no less than among Christians. When a society has ceased to be an ever-teeming magma, when its component parts have crystallised out into a petrological texture which admits no further differentiation or development, the end of that society has surely come.

Christianity, so long a source of intestine weakness in the Empire, had been captured by the cool policy of Constantine, who had made the new faith in effect, if not yet officially, the religion of the State, and had enlisted all the young ardour of the grateful Church to buttress the peace of his Empire and uphold the Flavian House. The exact nature of Constantine's religious views probably will always provide occasion for conflicting judgment. Some have roundly branded him as an adventurer, adopting Christianity for his personal advantage—a selfish schemer who "used the altars of the Church as a convenient footstool to the throne of the Empire."[1] Colour is lent to such a view by the language employed even by his professed panegyrist Eusebius, who frankly represents the Emperor, on the eve of the decisive campaign against Maxentius, as anxiously revolving in his mind the problem of what God would be the most powerful ally for him to secure in the forthcoming struggle. Other authorities read in Constantine's action the highest and most far-reaching political motives. Others, again, have recognised in him the zeal of an ardent believer. The truth, as usual in such matters, is doubtless to be sought in a middle view. Like most men of his temper and training, Constantine's motives were mixed. Despite his overweening, ruthless ambition, and the frightful crimes which stain his memory, we have no reason to suppose that he was an irreligious man. On the contrary, such evidence as we do

[1]Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury, Vol. II, p. 306.

possess seems to suggest rather that in his inmost soul he was something of a deist. He never formally adopted Christianity as the State religion, and throughout his reign he continued to act as *Pontifex Maximus* of the old Roman pagan faith. He belonged to both religions, Symmachus could say at a later date. Although his children were brought up in the new faith, Constantine himself did not accept baptism until he lay on his deathbed—and then with the curiously characteristic remark, "Let there be no mistake." While raising Christianity to a position of equality, even of privilege, he yet in no way molested the old beliefs. Except in certain cases where public morality was involved, he closed no temple and overthrew no idol. Nay, rather, in his new capital at Constantinople he erected and endowed at least one pagan shrine, and at Rome he restored another. On the earlier coins of his reign the old pagan symbols continue to be inscribed, but latterly they give place to legends of neutral meaning, and in a few cases to definitely Christian tokens like the *labarum* or standard of the Cross, beneath which Christian fable asserted that he had gained his first great victory at the Milvian Bridge.

Constantine's motive in thus giving Christianity a quasi-official sanction may be readily understood. Above all things a statesman, with a statesman's love of unity and discipline, he saw very clearly that the Church, instead of being as hitherto a disintegrating force within the Empire, might be transformed into a powerful cement of Imperial authority. It is this overmastering desire for unity that explains the Emperor's brusque action against the rabid Donatist schism in 313, as also his policy towards the far more serious Arian heresy, with its bold denial of the consubstantial and coequal divinity of Christ. It was to restore the unity of the Church, thus menaced by what in his eyes was merely "a silly question," "a light and vain contention about words," that Constantine summoned the memorable Council of Nicaea in 325, as a result of whose deliberations the heresiarch Arius was banished. His peculiar attitude towards such questions we can learn precisely from Constantine's own words. It was quite impossible for him, he wrote *à propos* of the Donatist schism, to stand aside and allow quarrels to develop in the Church Catholic that might arouse the ire of the Supreme Deity, not only against mankind in general, but also against

himself, Constantine, in particular, into whose hands the aforesaid Deity—in its wisdom we are to understand—had entrusted the paramount rule over mankind. If the Donatists continue obstinate, he wrote at a later date, the Heavenly Power might be offended and his good repute might be damaged, "which I desire always to be undiminished." Schism in the Church, comments the church historian, Socrates, not inaptly, the Emperor regarded as his own calamity. So also, in his first letter about the Arian controversy, Constantine describes discord in the Church as a "poisoned infection." Again and again in his rescripts upon ecclesiastical matters we see breaking forth his passionate desire for peace and unity within the Church, and his utter abhorrence of "pestilent contention." The barbarians who had embraced Christianity during his reign, he notes complacently, had done so "for the awe and loyalty they owe unto our Imperial sceptre."

But if Constantine dreamed that by his august intervention at Nicaea the triumph of orthodoxy had been assured, then his mistake was indeed profound. He himself was destined in his last moments to receive baptism at the hands of an Arian bishop; and under his son, Constantius, the Arian heresy towered into colossal proportions, split the Church in the hour of her triumph, captured the Imperial throne itself, and involved every city in the east in partisan riot and bloodshed. Christianity in fact was come, as its Founder had foretold, not to give peace on earth but rather division. Nay more, even larger consequences were implicit in this new alliance between the Empire and the Church. *Quid est imperatori cum ecclesia?* the Donatists latterly would ask with indignation: but time was to provide an unexpected answer to their question. Constantine had doubtless dreamed of a well-organised and pliant hierarchy, acting as a bulwark to the State, yet the moment was not far distant when the Church, interpreting this alliance on her own terms, would seek to dominate the State. The same century that saw Constantine smoothly guiding the deliberations of the Nicene Council, would witness also St. Ambrose rebuking the great Theodosius, publicly and to his face, on the steps of the High Church at Milan. In the story of that famous penance we observe for the first time, sharply emerging, that dualism of Church and State which was to be the *leitmotiv* of the Middle Ages. Ambrose and

Theodosius are the prototypes of a long line, of Hildebrand and Henry IV, of Anselm and Rufus, of Becket and Henry II, of Andrew Melville and James VI. "My will shall be your guiding line," Constantius had told the bishops assembled in council at Milan in 355: *ecclesia iam nunc est regnum,* replied Augustine fifty years later. "Sir, as divers times before, so now again I must tell you," cried Andrew Melville to King James, insolently plucking him by the sleeve, "there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus, and His kingdom the Kirk, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom not a king, nor a head, nor a lord, but a member. And they whom Christ has called, and commanded to watch over His Kirk, and govern His spiritual kingdom, have sufficient power of Him, and authority so to do, both together and severally, the which no Christian king nor prince should control and discharge, but fortify and assist; otherwise, not faithful subjects, nor members of Christ."

In many respects the Constantinian reorganisation of the Empire was well conceived and bold in execution: and its effects are shown in the increased stability of the administrative fabric during the fourth century. But despite the outward show of recovered strength, the Empire continued to suffer from deep-rooted social and economic evils, which the system of Diocletian and Constantine intensified rather than relieved. The ancient world was slowly dying of over-civilisation. Through the combined results of dissemination and sterility, the old Roman or Italian stock, upon whose *virtus,* or qualities of resolute efficiency, the health of the State had primarily depended, was now extinct—swamped in the general mass of inferior strains that under the pampering influence of the Imperial system bred apace in every city of the Empire. Even the old Roman tradition, which survived as a cohesive force long after the Roman stock had perished, was itself fast dying out amid the general commingling of races throughout the Mediterranean world. To the same result contributed the extensive manumissions of slaves that took place under the influence of the new humanitarian movement, generated by Stoicism with its emphasis laid on the value of personality. Whole provinces, moreover, were de-Romanised through the importation of external tribes in order to make good the wastage of war, famine, endemic pestilence and

economic decay. Yet in spite of such drastic remedies, alike in numbers and in resources the population was dwindling, crushed by the appalling burden of taxes required to support the army—now increased to an establishment (at all events on paper) of 645,000—to keep up the enormous blood-sucking staff of officials, and to maintain the corrupt luxury of the Court. Men complained that the number of the tax-gatherers exceeded that of the taxed. *Penuria hominum* is a recurrent lament of the times. With the declining population the dearth of agricultural labour waxed so great that conscription in the rural districts was extensively commuted for monetary payments *(aurum tironicum)* which were used to hire recruits from beyond the frontiers—a fatal process, that hastened the barbarisation of the army and the Empire.[1] More and more the higher military officers came to be of German or Slav extraction: the names of army leaders found in Ammian afford ample illustration. And with the ever growing importance of the army in the State, these barbarian officers in high places began to exercise an unhealthy influence on Imperial politics: the man in the sheep skin now bosses the man in the toga, complained Synesius a little later.

Unredeemed by the stimulus of a healthy political interest, and with their own selfish comfort assured on a basis of slavery, the wealthy classes were sunk in moral bankruptcy. The middle classes, always the bulwark of society, and under the early Empire a main pillar of the constitution, were fast being involved in financial disaster. Then, as in our own not dissimilar age, they formed the particular and unresisting prey of the tax-collector. In the *municipia* the *curiales,* or members of the local senates, compulsorily bound in a rigid and hereditary corporation, were liable personally for the Imperial dues and for multifarious financial contributions (*liturgiae*) and burdens of service (*munera curiae*) in respect of the community: an obligation which frequently resulted in their utter ruin. The publicist Libanius, in his *Funeral Oration on Julian,* has painted a striking picture of the sad decay of these municipal bodies. For most of the members, he says, the holding of office meant pauperdom, and the councils he describes as

[1] Ammianus Marcellinus, *History,* Bk. XIX, Chap. xi, 7: "*quae spes rem Romanam aliquotiens adgravavit.*"

resembling gatherings of wrinkled and ragged old women. If any of these unfortunates attempted by flight to escape the crippling burden of public dues, the law treated him no better than a fugitive slave, and offered a pecuniary reward to anyone who would assist in dragging him back to his post. As to the lower classes, these may be dismissed, broadly speaking, in a word: *panis et circenses*—the dole and football—summed up their philosophy of life.

Corruption was rife throughout the Imperial and municipal services, and even under the most enlightened Emperors misgovernment and fiscal oppression were chronic.[1] "The laws were not valid against all classes." An army of spies—euphemistically described as *agentes in rebus* —crept everywhere, invading the most secret recesses of family life. Beneath the ever-growing economic distress whole districts, unravaged by the Teuton, the Slav, or the Sassanid, were relapsing into primeval wilderness. Despite State grants of stock and implements, even of slaves, agriculture steadily declined; the *coloni*, or tenant farmers who conducted their holdings on the *métayer* system, were now sunk into a condition of serfdom, and like their medieval successors had become *adscripti glebae*, thirled to the soil by Imperial enactment, transferable along with the land which they cultivated—mere revenue producing machines in fact. The State had ceased to regard its subjects as citizens, and treated them instead simply as economic units. An increasing and unhealthy antagonism made itself apparent between the urban and the rural elements in the provincial populations. Commerce was stagnant: industry shrank in a measure corresponding to the general lowering of productivity and purchasing power alike in town and country. Literature and art were languishing; in both, the critic long since had ousted the creator.

Although Constantine wisely made no open onslaught upon paganism, the old Gods also, like everything else in this autumnal

[1] "Compared with the delicate and complicated system of the early Empire, in which stress was laid on the self-government of the cities, while the bureaucracy was a subsidiary organ and an organ of control, the system of the late Empire, despite its apparent complexity, was much simpler, much more primitive, and infinitely more brutal. Being supreme and omnipotent, and not subject to any control exercised in one way or another by those who were the life-blood of the State, the bureaucracy gradually became utterly corrupt and dishonest, and at the same time comparatively inefficient, in spite of the high professional training of its members"—Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.*, pp. 459-60.

period, were far gone in senile decay. For the mass of the people the ancestral cults had ceased to have real meaning, or were involved in the grossest superstition. To a large extent belief in the Gods of the classic pantheon had given way to a motley throng of outlandish deities, imported mainly from the east; among whom the Sun-God Mithras had now won foremost place, at all events in the army. While many of the finest minds of the age still clung gallantly to paganism, the Neoplatonic philosophy in which they sought to recreate a rational basis for the ancient faith could never hope to vie with the objective historical reality of Christ the Saviour. In the face of growing public misery, where the pagan grimly thought of destiny, the Christian dwelt with joy unspeakable upon the Divine Message of Consolation. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—this was a message to which the older faiths could offer nothing comparable. "Whosoever is God-forsaken, him will the Kingdom of God receive": against so triumphant a pronouncement the current paganism could make no appeal to the masses, nor could its Neoplatonist advocates, earnest and upright thinkers as they were, provide an enduring platform for a reconstruction of the outworn creeds of Greece and Rome. Rather this new, eclectic, philosophical, rational paganism turned away from faith towards sentiment and culture, and allied itself with the Hellenistic movement—the effort to keep alive the flickering torch of that glorious old Greek civilisation with which the ancient faith was inextricably linked, and which shared in the menace of destruction portended by triumphant Christianity, now more and more revealing itself as a force hostile to classical thought and learning.

Alone in a dying world, in a world socially and morally rotten at the core, the new religion seemed at first to preserve a vital spark and the promise of better things. Yet Christianity, too, could not escape contamination from the society that surrounded it. No man may touch pitch and remain undefiled. The Church no longer primitive had become *salonfähig*;[1] and inevitably she must pay a dear price for the boon of prosperity and privilege which had taken the place of the

[1] E. Stein, *Geschichte des Spätromischen Reiches*, Vol. I, p. 15.

apostolic poverty and intermittent persecution formerly her lot. Sunning themselves in Imperial favour, the higher clergy more and more degenerated into proud prelates and resplendent courtiers. Petticoat intrigue and shameless place-hunting were accounted the besetting sins of bishops. The lower clergy were too often brutally ignorant and repulsively fanatical. Among the city congregations intolerance and sectarian bitterness were rampant; and in the violence of doctrinal controversy was revealed a fierce and reckless bigotry new to the ancient world—a spirit that filled the minds of moderate men with amazement and disgust. In the studied sneer of Gibbon,[1] the Christians were more solicitous to explore the nature than to practise the laws of their Founder. "No wild beasts are more hostile to human beings," wrote the sober Ammian, the historian of those times, "than the Christians usually are to one another."[2] In the equally emphatic language of another ancient historian, whose testimony comes with all the more crushing weight in that he himself was a Christian: "the violence truly was no less than the of old practised towards the Christians, when they were compelled and drawn to sacrifice unto idols. For many endured sundry kinds of torment; often racking and dismembering of their joints; confiscating of their substance; some bereaved of their native soil; other some departed this life under the hands of the tormentor; some died in banishment and never saw their country again." How the Arians during their ascendancy dealt with those who differed from them is thus further described—let us hope, for the credit of humanity, with some exaggeration. "Many excellent and notable men were then apprehended and grievously plagued, because they refused to be partakers of their communion: yea, after torments they were constrained by force to communicate with them. For they stretched wide open and gagged their mouths, they popped in the ministries; such as were thus handled took it far more grievous than all the other torments. They trailed women and children by main force into their communion. If any refused or gainsaid their doings, immediately they were scourged, after stripes imprisoned, and in the

[1] Ed. Bury, Vol. V, p. 26.

[2] "*Nullas infestas hominibus bestias, ut sibi feralibus plerisque Christianorum expertus*" —Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. v, 4.

end compelled to endure more bitter torments. . . . Of the women that denied to communicate with them, some were laid along in chests, and at the lids their breasts sawed off; some other had their paps burned with searing irons, glowing hot, and with eggs laid thereunto that were roasted so hard that they scalded for heat. These new kinds of torments, never heard of before among pagans and ethnics, were practised of these men which professed Christianity."[1] Such a description, in all its horrid circumstance, brings forcibly home to our minds the simple fact that, in a society full of ugly aspects, the ugliest spectacle was the Eastern Church. Amid such conditions Christian thought inevitably tended to harden and narrow equally with Christian practice. Retribution came to bulk larger than mercy in the Church's teaching: the common folk, even an Origen could say, need to be instructed only in so far as concerns the punishment of sinners!

In the face of accumulated misery so vast as to seem overpowering, large sections of the human race became too stunned by the immensity of their suffering to retain any desire for betterment. With the rise and spread of monachism, many sought relief from their distress by flying forth into the wilderness—to such an extent that the Emperors soon found it necessary to legislate against a tendency which threatened further to weaken the shrinking man-power of the Empire, and threw all the heavier burdens upon those who did not thus endeavour to evade their civic responsibilities. In the last analysis such asceticism was a gospel of despair, since in it the individual sought a selfish deliverance from the world rather than seeking to deliver the world from itself by contributing in his corporate life to the spreading of Christ's spirit among his fellow men. Much exclusiveness and arrogance also came to inhere in the monastic outlook: "they are for the most part men who by making small sacrifices gain much, and in addition secure honour, gather crowds around them, and are greatly flattered"—such is Julian's astringent characterisation of the monks of his day.[2]

The defence and government of the State were in the hands of the

[1] Socrates Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. II, Chaps. xxvii and xxxviii. I quote from the fine English version of Meredith Hanmer (ed. 1585, pp. 273, 285).

[2] *Oration against the Cynic Heraclius*, Works, ed. W. C. Wright, Vol. II, p. 122.

Emperor with his generals and ministers. The ordinary citizen had little interest in their doings. Like Gallio of old, he cared for none of these things. His co-operation was not invited: his task was simply to obey and hold his tongue. The State, wrote Synesius, has a bone to pick with the citizen who provides for his own defence. And so, when corruption and decay set in, there was no vigilant body of public opinion to demand, and if need be to enforce, the correction of abuses. In the hour of her weakness the Empire could not call upon a patriotism which she had taken little pains to instil among her subjects. Hence in the fourth century we find, on the whole, scanty evidence of anything like the manifestation of a public spirit ranging itself by the side of the Emperors in their long and gallant but losing battle for civilisation. On the contrary, apathy, pessimism, timidity in the presence of unknown yet vaguely dreaded misfortunes to come—in a word, what Mr. Norman Baynes has well described as the "psychology of dependence"[1] was the keynote of the time. Degeneration of moral fibre inevitably followed in the wake of the total abolition of civic responsibility on the part of the individual member of the State. The dread of those things which are coming on the earth lay heavy on men's hearts. Everywhere were seen the dire consequences flowing from that sin of darkened soul, the stubborn, deadly sin of which the old poet had sung. Everywhere were manifest signs of that terrible *taedium vivendi et moriendi metus,* that soul-chilling sense of the *monstrum vitae et mortis profunditas,* which oppressed St. Augustine at the darkest moment in his life. A universal failure of nerve, in Bury's phrase, had overtaken mankind. And amid the gloomy skies which overhung a foundering civilisation were heard the first ominous mutterings of the renewed storm of barbarian invasion that in the next century would bring the decaying fabric of Empire down in a resounding crash of universal ruin. To sum up the age in the closing words of Merezhkovski's powerful drama: "Night and tempest, hand in hand, were striding on apace."

That this dying world should be saved was beyond the power of mortal man; although by his vigorous pulling together of its disjointed

[1] "Decay of the Western Power" in *The Universal History of the World,* ed. J. A. Hammerton, Vol. IV, pp. 2227-8.

political fabric Constantine might indeed purchase yet a brief respite. What he did successfully accomplish was to rally all that still breathed of the ancient civilisation round his new capital in the east, where the economic and social life of the Mediterranean world had older and stronger roots than in the west. In the foundation of Constantinople the eventual ruin of the western provinces was assured: but this was already a foregone conclusion, and it was something that by the prevision of Constantine the residue should have been salved.

Such was the posture of affairs when there mounted the throne of the Caesars a young man born of the House of Constantine, endued with a high soul and ardent temper, witty and eloquent, warm-hearted, generous, impulsive, a profound scholar, brilliant writer and earnest thinker, soaked to the marrow in classical tradition, glorying in the "golden past" of Greece and Rome. He, a shy and sensitive student, unexercised in great matters, brought up in cloistered solitude amid constant suspicion and danger of his life, when suddenly elevated to the pinnacle of power revealed himself, without training, as a great soldier and statesman, a wise and just administrator and enlightened law giver. Also he revealed himself a man of large and warm humanity, gifted with a marvellous witchery over the minds of his fellow men—just the ruler, in short, who might have done so much to alleviate, if not to cure, the deep-seated evils under which the Empire was sinking.

And yet this richly-gifted and noble-minded man, nephew of Constantine and brought up as a Christian, chose instead to bend the whole force of his vibrant personality, to consecrate all his brilliant endowments and high endeavour, in the hopeless task of stemming the current of his age, of overthrowing the religion which his uncle had established, of breathing new life into the grey cold ashes of paganism, of calling back the mighty spirit of old Hellas that long since had fled the world. A hopeless task indeed! After a meteoric career that filled the world with the wonder of his deeds, having tasted the bitter fruit of disillusion, at the age of thirty-one he sought and found a hero's death at the head of his troops—leaving behind a memory cursed by the Christians down the ages as Julian the Apostate, yet recognised by after generations as one of the noblest spirits of antiquity.

Such a man, against such a background, would in any event have riveted the attention of posterity: but our interest in Julian is tenfold quickened by the abundant writings which he has left behind him, illuminating his dreams, motives, and actions at every stage in his brief and stormy life; as also by the mass of controversial literature—offspring of intense admiration and bitterest hatred—that gathered around his personality even in his own generation; and, not least, by the fortunate chance that his Imperial career, so dazzling in its short-lived brilliance, has been described for us in ample detail and scrupulous fidelity by a cool and accurate contemporary who was the last great historian of that ancient world which found in Julian its ultimate champion.

II.

ΙΟΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΑΒΑΤΟΥ.

Ὡς ἐθέλει τὸ φέρον σε
φέρειν, φέρου· ἢν δ' ἀπιθήσῃς
καὶ σαυτὸν βλάψεις, καὶ τὸ
φέρον σε φέρει.

By JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

Fate speeds thee forth: do thou begone; nor strive
To kick against the pricks; thou shalt not thrive
Rebellious thus, but thine own hand will draw
Destruction on thyself: it is the Law—
Fate speeds thee forth!

FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS JULIANUS was the son of Julius Constantius, brother of Constantine the Great, and his wife, Basilina, a Bithynian lady of noble birth, a member of the great house of the Anicii, highly cultured, and an earnest Christian. Julian was born at Constantinople on 6th November, 331: his mother died within a few months of his birth—Athene in her divine mercy took her away from the woes that were to come, so Julian wrote bitterly, long afterwards. At the age of five he lost his father also, for Julius Constantius was involved in the promiscuous butchery of their relatives which the three sons of the first Christian Emperor carried out on their father's death in 337. For this frightful crime the main responsibility must rest with the second son, Constantius—then a long-nosed, close-lipped, wary, unboyish youth of twenty, who alone of them was present in Constantinople at the time when the deed of blood took place.[1] In this

[1] "*Constantio sinente potius quam iubente,*" is the guarded phrase of Eutropius (Bk. X, Chap. ix). The comment of La Blétterie exactly meets the situation:—"*L'Empereur Constance, le seul des trois Augustes qui fût à portée d'arrêter le soulèvement, en étoit peut être auteur*"—*Vie de L'Empereur Julien*, p. 5. Ammian, cautious and sober enough in his judgments, roundly describes Constantius as "*in propinquitatis perniciem inclinatior*"—Bk. XIV, Chap. xi, 7: *cf.* Zosimus, *History*, Bk. III, Chap. i. Still more decisively, in his

massacre perished all the male relatives of the House of Constantine, except only the little Julian and his elder half-brother, Gallus, whom the murderers spared because of their tender age—Gallus in any case was sick at the time with an illness likely to prove mortal.[1] Having thus comfortably secured their position, the three brothers, Constantine II, Constantius and Constans, divided the Empire. Constantine and Constans soon fell out; and the former invading his brother's dominions was killed in 340. Ten years later Constans himself was slain by the usurper Magnentius; and upon the latter's overthrow in 353 Constantius reunited the Empire under his sceptre. He was a man not devoid of ability, of unblemished private life, sober, orderly and hard-working, physically active and skilled in manly exercises, possessed of a high sense of his duty as a sovereign. But *peccatum poena peccati*—his whole being was poisoned by the consciousness of crime, which made him malignantly suspicious, incapable of generosity, utterly unscrupulous and pitilessly cruel when once his jealous fears had been aroused. In religion he was a bigoted and persecuting Arian. *Kleinlich und finster* are the words in which the German historian, Richter, tersely and truly sums up his character.[2] Lacking that daemonic power of ruthless concentration on an evil purpose which marks the villain on a grand scale, he wavered grotesquely throughout his life between oriental caprice and Christian scruple.[3]

After the murder of their father, Gallus and Julian were separated, and Julian was brought up first at Constantinople and then at

eminently well-balanced review of the Emperor's virtues and vices, Bk. XXI, Chap. xvi, 8, Ammian states that at the outset of his reign he "*cunctos sanguine et genere se contingentes stirpitus interemit.*" Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. 1, explicitly accuses Constantius of responsibility for the massacre—perhaps borrowing from Julian himself (*Epistle to the Athenians* in *Works*, ed. W. C. Wright, Vol. II, p. 248); though in this particular matter, and under the special circumstances which prompted his manifesto, the Imperial pamphleteer can hardly be accounted an impartial witness. It is, however, to be noted that Constantius annexed for his own use the property of the victims. In view of all the evidence we can hardly doubt that he was consenting unto their death. For the date of the massacre see N. H. Baynes in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, Vol. XI, p. 67.

[1] One of the most terrible examples of the depths to which blind hatred of the Apostate could sink the Christian apologist will be found in two passages where Gregory of Nazianzus blames Constantius for misplaced humanity in saving the child Julian from the massacre—*First Invective against Julian*, Chaps. iii and xlviii.

[2] H. Richter, *Das Weströmische Reich*, p. 115.

[3] Johannes Geffcken, *Kaiser Julianus*, p. 5.

PLATE II.

CONSTANTIUS II.

Head from a colossal bronze statue: now in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome. Height, 6 ft. $\frac{8}{9}$ in.

See E. Strong, *La Scultura Romana da Augusto a Costantino*, p. 410 and Plate lxxxi; A. Riegl, *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, ed. 1927, p. 208 and Fig. 47; E. Stein, *Geschichte des Spätrömischen Reiches*, Vol. I, p. xiii, with authorities cited.

(Reproduced from Stein, op. cit., Plate 5, by courtesy of Messrs. L. W. Seidel & Son, Vienna.)

Nicomedia. His supervision was entrusted to the semi-Arian courtier-bishop, Eusebius, and the latter gave the child into the care of an old Gothic eunuch called Mardonius, who had been his mother's tutor, a severe but kindly disciplinarian, a widely read scholar, "gentle and loyal," full of burning love for the literature of old Hellas. Thus early was the young Julian brought under the influence that was to mould the career of the future Apostate.[1] He himself has left us a vivid description of his schooling. "I was taught by my tutor," he tells us, "to look on the ground when I was on my way to school; and as for a theatre, I never saw one until I had more hair on my chin than on my head, and even at that age it was never by my own wish. . . . I assure you, by Zeus and the Muses, that while I was still a mere boy my tutor would often say to me:—'Never let the crowd of your play-mates who flock to the theatres lead you into the mistake of craving for such spectacles. Have you a passion for horse-races? There is one in Homer, very cleverly described. Take the book and study it! Do you hear them talking about dancers in the pantomime? Leave these alone! Among the Phaeacians the youths dance in more manly fashion. And for citharode you have Phemius; for singer, Demodocus. Moreover there are in Homer many plants more delightful to hear of than those which we can see:—

> "Thus seems the palm with stately honours crowned
> By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground,
> The pride of Delos."[2]

And consider the wooded island of Calypso and the caves of Circe and the garden of Alcinous: be assured that you will never see anything more delightful than these!'" "My tutor got hold of me," continues Julian, "since I was young and loved literature, and convinced me that if I would emulate Plato and Socrates, Aristotle and Theophrastus, I should become better, not perhaps than other men, but certainly better than my former self. . . These things he taught me, thinking I should be a private citizen: for he certainly did not foresee

[1] Libanius, *Funeral Oration on Julian*, § 11, mentions a "παιδαγωγὸς ἕτερος οὐκ ἄμοιρος παιδείας": but *cf.* W. Koch, *Kaiser Julian der Abtrünnige, seine Jugend und Kriegstaten bis zum Tode des Kaisers Constantius*, in *Jahrbücher für Classische Philologie*, Supplementary Volume XXV, p. 354.

[2] Homer, *Odyssey*, Bk. VI, v. 162 (the translation is Pope's).

that Zeus would assign to me my present lot. But I have been ashamed to be less virtuous as a ruler than I was in private life."[1]

In 345 this purely Hellenistic education in which the eager and shrewd old tutor was bringing up his Imperial pupil was rudely interrupted. As Gallus and Julian grew older, guilty dread of the only two surviving members of his family overcame every other motive in the dark and petty soul of Constantius; and now he packed them off to a solitary confinement in the remote palace of Macellum, or Fundus Macelli, an ancient hunting seat of the Cappadocian kings amid the Taurus mountains, near Caesarea. Here the two boys lived six years, immured alive as it were within the confines of the castle and its park, cut off almost entirely from the world outside, and subjected to purely Christian and indeed strictly Arian influences. "How shall I describe the six years we spent there?" wrote Julian indignantly afterwards, perhaps not without some natural exaggeration.[2] "No stranger came to see us, and not one of our old friends was allowed to visit us. We lived shut off from every liberal study and from all free intercourse, in a glittering servitude, sharing the exercises of our own slaves as though they were comrades."[3] Yet for Julian at least there remained always the consolation of reading. "Some men," he wrote in after years, "love horses, others birds, others again wild animals; but I from childhood have been penetrated by a passionate longing to acquire books."[4] We learn from his own writings that during his incarceration books were lent him by George, Bishop of Alexandria, of whom more hereafter: and it was at this period that he acquired the thorough grounding in the Scriptures and in Christian dogmatics which he afterwards so powerfully displayed against the faith he had forsworn. At Macellum Julian was admitted to the office of reader in the Church.[5] Once, and once only—apparently in 347—did their reigning cousin visit

[1]Julian in *Misopogon*; Wright, Vol. II, pp. 456-60, 464, 466.

[2]Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. V, Chap. ii, gives rather a different account of Julian's life at Macellum.

[3]*Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 250.

[4]*Letter to Ecdicius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 72.

[5]In the fourth century the office of reader was commonly given to boys undergoing a quasi-ecclesiastical education, which at the same time left them free to choose a lay profession.

the two brothers here, in order personally to satisfy himself as to the progress of their upbringing.

Clearly these six drab years of rigorous internment made a deep mark on the impressionable soul of young Julian. With his half-brother he could have little in common. Gallus was a mere lusty animal, unintellectual, passionate and headstrong: men afterwards compared the two brothers to Titus and Domitian. Thrown back thus on his own thoughts, the lonely, meditative Julian became more and more devoted to that Hellenism, with all its marvellous literary and artistic achievement, in the love of which he had been so thoroughly schooled by his old tutor, Mardonius. To the forlorn and friendless lad, all that was most beautiful in life seemed enshrined in "the glory that was Greece," while the world in which he lived was merely hideous. And the mystic element in his nature was fed by daily contemplation of the grand and solemn, snow-clad mountain range—"the great and far-flung Taurus,"[1] so he describes it. With a modern poet he might have cried:—

> "Now turn I to that God of old
> Who mocked not any of my ills;
> But gave my hungry hands to hold
> The large religion of the hills."

As a child, Julian further tells us, he would often wander forth alone into the starry-kirtled night, lost to all the world in rapt admiration of the celestial glories. And already amid all this romantic nature-worship there was growing in the boy's mind a deep aversion from the religion in which he had been brought up. At a period when "every wind scattered round the Empire the leaves of controversy," even into the guarded solitude of Macellum would penetrate the echoes of the sordid sectarian strife that convulsed the Christian world; nor could Julian have been ignorant of the corruption which had eaten so deeply into the vitals of the Church. The new religion, we know from the testimony of Socrates, himself a Christian, "was openly derided of all men, even in the theatres and solemn spectacles."[2] As Kingsley has well remarked, the Christians, while they hated and persecuted each

[1]Fragment 2 in Wright, Vol. III, p. 296.

[2]Socrates, Bk. I, Chap. vi; Hanmer, p. 219.

other for arguments about God, were denying and blaspheming Him in every action of their lives.[1] Such men had changed the truth of God into a lie: what wonder if the keenly observant young prince drew his own deduction from their conduct?

Julian also could never forget the awful crimes committed by the Christian rulers of his own house. He knew that Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, whom the bishops called "Equal of the Apostles," had slain his own gallant son and had scalded his own wife to death in her bathroom. He knew now that his reigning cousin's hands were red with the blood of Julian's own father and many of his kindred. He has himself described to us, in vivid terms, the appalling effect which the discovery, made at Macellum, of the Emperor's complicity in this dark and terrible tragedy excited upon his horror-struck soul. For a while, he says, he dreamed of suicide as the only way to end the utter misery in which the revelation overwhelmed him.[2] It is not too much, I think, to regard the moment of this discovery as a crisis in Julian's life. And always he felt deeply the intolerable injustice of the treatment meted out by Constantius to his brother and himself. It was no marvel, then, that the ardent young Hellenist, thus eating the bitter bread of banishment, should experience a growing revulsion from the faith under whose cloak such foul deeds had been done, the religion that filled the Empire with the din of stupid faction, and seemed already on the high road to blot out for ever the grand old culture to which the boy's whole inner being was increasingly devoted. For in the eager heart of young Julian the Iliad and the Odyssey were now fast usurping the place of the Christian Scriptures:—

"Fain would I sing what transport stormed his soul,
How the red current throbbed his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,
Without art graceful, without effort strong,
Homer raised high to heaven the loud, the impetuous song."

To such a mood, how infinitely more attractive than the rigid and frigid Christian dogmas, which must be swallowed without question and without moral effort, was the Neoplatonic philosophy with its

[1]Preface to *Hypatia*.

[2]See Geffcken, *op. cit.*, p. 10, with references cited *ad loc.* at p. 129.

invitation, so enticing to a young, acute, and ardent mind, to strive ever forwards and upwards through various stages of emotional exaltation until the goal of ecstatic union with the Highest and Holiest Ultimate was achieved!

In March, 351, a change for the better occurred in the fortunes of the two young princes. Sore beset with difficulties in east and west, and moved perhaps by some bite of tardy remorse, Constantius thought now to take into partnership the elder of his two cousins whom he had so deeply wronged. So he drew forth Gallus and Julian from their prison at Macellum, elevated the former—now aged twenty-five—to the rank of Caesar (or Vice-Emperor) of the East, and gave him the hand of his sister Constantia. Julian was sent to Constantinople, and afterwards to Nicomedia, where he was allowed to prosecute his studies in comparative freedom.[1] The fact that Julian was sent thither shows how little the bishops and eunuchs who held the Emperor's ear had gauged the young prince's character and leanings. For Nicomedia was one of the citadels of expiring Hellenism. Here dwelt Libanius, the greatest sophist and rhetorician of the age, "a master-craftsman in eloquence," as Julian admiringly calls him.[2] The Imperial student was forbidden to attend the lectures of the famous pagan professor,[3] but needless to say he bought them, and devoured them with the utmost zeal. With amiable smugness, Libanius himself remarks that Julian modelled his style upon his own. "By comparing their works," comments La Bléterie, "we find in reality that Julian resembles Libanius, but it is with a handsome likeness, and in the same manner as a person of quality, who speaks well without affecting to do so, may be said to resemble a rhetorician who makes it his study."[4] To the end of his days Julian retained what must seem to us an altogether extravagant admiration for the undoubted oratorical, literary and intellectual gifts of Libanius. In a letter written to him at Antioch during the winter of

[1]The chronology of Julian's career up to this date is not free from obscurities, and an attempt to reconstruct it on somewhat different lines has been made by Norman H. Baynes, "The Early Life of Julian the Apostate" in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. XLV, pp. 251-4. *Cf.* the same writer in *English Historical Review*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 757-9.

[2]*Misopogon*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 466.

[3]On this point see G. R. Sievers, *Das Leben des Libanius*, p. 54, note 5.

[4]La Bléterie, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17. The translation is from the English version of 1746, pp. 17-18,

362, "I read yesterday almost all your speech before breakfast," he says in high enthusiasm, "and after breakfast, before resting, I gave myself up to reading the remainder. Happy man to be able to speak so well, or rather to have such ideas! O what a discourse! what wit! what wisdom! what analysis! what logic! what method! what openings! what diction! what symmetry! what structure!"[1]

In the cities of Ionia, that favoured country which Herodotus considered the fairest of all earthly lands, the lamp of the old Greek culture still bravely burned. At Ephesus dwelt Maximus, who may be described as the high priest of Hellenistic paganism, a man of striking personality, probably a quack,[2] certainly a schemer, tall, white-bearded, with piercing eyes, reputed as a user of curious arts who habitually consorted with the Gods. Learning of his great fame and thaumaturgic powers, Julian hastened to Ephesus to make his acquaintance; and under the influence of his dominating will the young, impressionable, superstitious prince, now just twenty years old, irrevocably committed himself to a secret espousal of paganism. In the words of Libanius, "having cast out of his mind the whole of the nonsense that had previously occupied it, he supplied its place with the beauty of truth; as though replacing in some grand temple the statues of the Gods previously prostrate in the mud."[3] Thereafter, in Julian's own words, his adherence to Christianity seemed to him as a dark period upon which he tried not to look back:—

"Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebrae,
Luminibusque prior rediit vigor."

More than all this, the historian Socrates very significantly remarks that Julian "had such a master" in Maximus "as inflamed his mind to aspire unto the Imperial sceptre."[4] To a man of the young prince's Messianic temperament such an aspiration must inevitably have presented itself, even without the instigation of Maximus, or the plot among the pagan leaders of the time which some historians have thought to discern.

[1] Wright, Vol. III, p. 184.

[2] "*Allem Anscheine nach einer der tüchtigsten Schwindler aller Zeiten,*" is the robust opinion of Stein, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 246.

[3] Libanius, *Funeral Oration on Julian*, § 19; translation in C. W. King, *Julian the Emperor*, p. 128.

[4] Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. 1; Hanmer, p. 296.

Amid these surroundings four years of uneventful study followed, diversified by occasional holidays at an old haunt of his childhood, a small farm in Bithynia opposite Constantinople, which alone remained to Julian of his ample patrimony. As Emperor afterwards he made a gift of this property to a friend, accompanying the present with a letter which is one of the most charming pieces in the whole of Greek literature, breathing an almost modern love of the simple things in nature.

"A small estate of four fields in Bithynia was left me by my grandmother, and this I give as an offering to your affection for me. It is too little a thing to bring a man much material benefit, but even so it is a gift that cannot wholly fail to please you, as you will see if I describe its charms one by one. It is situated not more than twenty stades from the sea, so that no sailor or trader with his rude chatter disturbs the place. Yet it is not entirely deprived of the gifts of Nereus, for it has a constant supply of fish, fresh and still gasping; and if you climb a certain hill, away from the house, you will see the Propontis, and the islands, and the city that bears the name of the noble Emperor; nor will you have to stand meantime on seaweed and tangle,[1] or be offended by the nauseous and unmentionable filth that is always thrown out on beaches, but your feet will rest amid convolvulus and thyme and fragrant grass. Very peaceful it is to lie down there and dip into a book, and now and then to rest one's eyes by gazing at the ships and the sea. When I was still hardly more than a boy, I thought that this was the most delightful summer resort, for it has also excellent springs, a charming bathing place, a garden, and trees. After I had grown to manhood I used to long for the old place and visited it often, and you may be sure our forgatherings there did not lack talks about literature. Moreover you will find there a modest specimen of my husbandry—a small vineyard that produces a fragrant, sweet wine which does not need time to mellow. The grapes, on the vine and when crushed in the press, smell of roses, and as for the new made wine in the jar—it is a very 'rill of nectar,' as old Homer would say.[2] Then why, you ask, is not so choice a vine planted over many acres? Ah well! perhaps I was not a very industrious gardener. But since I am temperate in my tributes to Bacchus, and much prefer the Nymphs, I only provided sufficient for myself and my friends—and they are few enough. So I now give you this as a present, my dear fellow, and though it is small, yet it will be precious to you as coming 'from a friend to a friend.'

"I have written this letter by lamplight, so if there are mistakes don't criticise it too harshly!"[3]

[1] *βρόοις*—mistranslated "brambles" by W. C. Wright.

[2] *Odyssey*, Bk. IX, v. 359.

[3] *Letter to Evagrius*, Wright, Vol. III, pp. 76-80; *cf.* G. Negri, *Julian the Apostate*, transl. Duchess Litta Visconti Arese, Vol. II, pp. 564-5.

Meantime from his capital at Antioch Julian's headstrong half-brother the Caesar Gallus, urged on by his cruel wife, Constantia—whom Ammian describes as an incarnate fury, lusting for human blood[1]—had involved the eastern provinces in a reign of terror. At last in December, 354, matters became so impossible that Constantius recalled him and had him executed. Although the characteristic mean and coward falsity with which the death of Gallus was contrived invest it with the quality of a judicial murder, his fate was otherwise richly deserved. Julian frankly admits his brother's failings, while bitterly accusing the Emperor of his death. "Surely he deserved to live," he wrote, "even if he seemed unfit to govern."[2] In the ruin of Gallus Julian also was very nearly involved. Summoned to Court at Milan, he spent several months there in strict confinement, "dragged hither and thither," he says,[3] and in hourly expectation of death. His life, he tells us, was spared on this occasion only through the intercession of the "beautiful and high-souled" Empress Eusebia—as Julian enthusiastically describes her. With great difficulty Eusebia procured for Julian an audience of his Imperial cousin, who seems to have had a morbid dread of meeting face to face his only surviving relative. Having succeeded in persuading Constantius that he had owned no treasonable dealings with Gallus during his brother's brief and ill-starred public life, Julian was permitted to resume his studies at the University of Athens, a place suggested to her husband by Eusebia, who thus rendered the ardent young student a service of priceless value in his eyes. Remote from the hazards of Court he might hope to forget alike his sorrows and his resentment in quiet study at the "lighthouse of the world"—the very fountain head of that old Hellenic literature the love of which was now become the ruling passion of his soul.

[1] "*Megaera quaedam mortalis, inflammatrix saevientis adsidua, humani cruoris avida*"—Ammian, Bk. XIV, Chap. i, 2.

[2] *Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 252. I cannot find any satisfactory evidence for the statement made by King, *Julian the Emperor*, p. 129, footnote 3, that "there was good proof that Gallus was preparing to dispute the Empire with his benefactor." Ammian, Bk. XIV, Chap. xi, 8, asserts that he toyed with such an idea only after he realised that Constantius was bent on his destruction. The vague phrases of Socrates, Bk. II, Chap. xxxiv, and Sozomenus, *Eccles. Hist.*, Bk. V, Chap. ii, are of little value as historical evidence.

[3] *Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 254.

We can readily picture the dramatic tenseness of that interview between "the Emperor, deep and cold," and the young cousin whom he had so utterly wronged. In aspect and in demeanour the advantage would probably lie with the elder man. Although neither tall nor well-built—his body was too long and his legs were bandy—Constantius had trained himself in the practice of a studied reserve of manner which lent him a sombre dignity. He never stooped to court the mob by any of the usual arts of popular appeal, and on public occasions, no less than in moments of crisis, his appearance was always calm and impressive. His cousin on the other hand was altogether more excitable and less self-controlled in his actions. Julian's bitter enemy, Gregory of Nazianzus, who was a fellow student with him at Athens, has noted his physical peculiarities at that time—certainly with a jaundiced eye, but we cannot fail to recognise a kernel of verity in his caricature of the jerky youth with unsteady glances, incessant chatter and unseasonable boisterousness. *Loquax talpa,*[1] the courtiers at Milan called him. Much indeed of this awkwardness and *gaucherie* can be set down to Julian's forlorn upbringing, and to the long period of confinement at Macellum, when his only companions, apart from his boorish brother, were inferiors and slaves. Years of hard toil, privation, responsibility and loneliness of mind would be required to transform the callow fledgling so uncharitably portrayed by Gregory into the hero whose composed gaze and lineaments of iron—in very truth a countenance enforcing homage — evoke our astonished admiration in the bust of Acerenza. Ammian tells us that Julian was of medium height, strongly built and well-proportioned: his features were sufficiently regular, and his face was lit up by a pair of brilliant and beautiful eyes "that revealed the subtlety of his mind"[2]—a characteristic which, as well as the curved neck, straight nose and out-thrust lower lip, also noted by Ammian, are finely brought out by the Acerenza sculptor.

Athens in the fourth century was still a great seat of learning and

[1] Ammian, Bk. XVII, Chap. xi, 1.

[2] "*Venustate oculorum micantium flagrans, qui mentis eius argutias indicabant*"—Ammian, Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 2. *Cf.* Bk. XV, Chap. viii, 16: "*oculos cum venustate terribiles.*"

a stronghold of paganism. In the words of Gibbon, "the Attic schools of rhetoric and philosophy maintained their superior reputation from the Peloponnesian War to the reign of Justinian. Athens, though situate in a barren soil, possessed a pure air, a free navigation, and the monuments of ancient art. That sacred retirement was seldom disturbed by the business of trade or government; and the last of the Athenians were distinguished by their lively wit, the purity of their taste and language, their social manners, and some traces, at least in discourse, of the magnanimity of their fathers. In the suburbs of the city, the academy of the Platonists, the lyceum of the Peripatetics, the portico of the Stoics, and the garden of the Epicureans,[1] were planted with trees and decorated with statues; and the philosophers, instead of being immured in a cloister, delivered their instruction in spacious and pleasant walks, which at different hours were consecrated to the exercises of the mind and body. The genius of the founders still lived in those venerable seats; the ambition of succeeding to the masters of human reason excited a generous emulation; and the merit of the candidates was determined, on each vacancy, by the free votes of an enlightened people. . . . The schools of Athens were protected by the wisest and most virtuous of the Roman princes. The library which Hadrian founded was placed in a portico adorned with pictures, statues, and a roof of alabaster, and supported by one hundred columns of Phrygian marble. The public salaries were assigned by the generous spirit of the Antonines; and each professor, of politics, of rhetoric, of the Platonic, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean philosophy, received an annual stipend of ten thousand drachmae, or more than three hundred pounds sterling. After the death of Marcus, these liberal donations, and the privileges attached to the thrones of science, were abolished and revived, diminished and enlarged; but some vestige of royal bounty may be found under the successors of Constantine."[2]

Julian's short stay as an undergraduate amid so congenial an environment is regarded by contemporary writers, pagan and Christian

[1]It must, of course, be understood that in the fourth century all these schools were teaching a more or less uniform Neoplatonic philosophy.

[2]Gibbon, ed. Bury, Vol. IV, pp. 263-4.

alike, as the critical period in his life. With Balaustion he might well have exclaimed, when the order to betake himself to Athens reached him:—

> "Ours the fasts and feasts,
> Chöes and Chutroi; ours the sacred grove,
> Agora, Dikasteria, Poikilé,
> Pnux, Keramikos: Salamis in sight,
> Psuttalia, Marathon itself, not far!
> Ours the great Dionusiac theatre,
> And tragic triad of immortal fames,
> Aischulos, Sophokles, Euripides!
> To Athens, all of us that have a soul,
> Follow me!"

At Athens Julian completed his education according to a course of study which had lately become established, and was to remain in vogue throughout the Middle Ages. Under his tutor and at school in Constantinople he had occupied himself, as we have seen, with the study of literature; Homer, Hesiod, Theognis, Demosthenes, Lysias, Herodotus, Thucydides, was the usual course of reading. Thereafter in the Ionian cities he passed successively through what medieval educationists termed the *quadrivium,* that is, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music: and finally now in the University of Athens he would devote his attention to philosophy in what were then regarded as its lower and its higher branches, namely Aristotelian realism, or the philosophy of the absolute, and Platonic idealism in the new, mystical form which Plotinus and his followers had given it.[1]

"Where there's true faith, there's no call for magic," says Puck to Una in Kipling's tale; and in the third and fourth centuries this massive truth was realised by the profoundest thinkers among pagans no less than among Christians. The great Neoplatonists hoped to attain their final goal of communion with the Supreme Principle only by dint of laborious self discipline and internal contemplation, which would enable them to rise by degrees through the successive stages of their mystical ascent. Love of God and the exercise of reason were the twin and only valid avenues of approach. For weaker or more impatient

[1]See an interesting little paper by Otmar Schissel on *Kaiser Julians Schulbildung* in *Klio,* Vol. XXIII, Part 2, pp. 326-8.

natures, in a superstitious age, there was always present—despite the stern warnings of Porphyry and others—the insidious urge to short-circuit the painful process by recourse to magic. To this fatal temptation, which was one of the curses of fourth century religious life, Christian equally with pagan—as indeed it is "the dark shadow cast by religion"[1] down the ages—the young Julian, whose enthusiasm in such matters was apt to be stronger than his intellect — *superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus observator,* says Ammian[2]—surrendered himself as an immediate and a willing victim. It was now at Athens that he was formally admitted into the cathartic rites of the Eleusinian mysteries, following the example of Marcus Aurelius, whom he thus early chose as his model. Libanius tells us how the young student soon showed that he knew more than his professors, and how he desired only to end his days in Athens, this seeming to him to be the crown of human joy.

But a higher and a sterner destiny awaited the last scion of the House of Constantine:—

"Maius opus moveo, et maior mihi nascitur ordo Rerum."[3]

New dangers were threatening the Empire in east and west. War had broken out with Persia; the German hordes had passed the Rhine and were cruelly devastating Gaul. Faced with these gathering difficulties at both extremes of his enormous realm, Constantius again felt the need for assistance, and despite the opposition of his eunuchs he bethought him of his young student cousin. In October, 355, Julian was summoned from Athens to the Court at Milan. In his manifesto to the Athenians, written after he became Emperor, he vividly portrays the consternation with which he received the order to quit his beloved studies. "What floods of tears I shed, what laments I uttered, stretching out my hands to your Acropolis, and imploring Athene not to abandon her suppliant, many of you who were eye witnesses can attest. The Goddess herself is my witness that I even begged for death at her hands rather than go to the Emperor." As Libanius very

[1]P. Gardner, *Religious Experience of St. Paul*, p. 67.
[2]Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 17.
[3]The Virgilian quotation is made by Ammian, Bk. XV, Chap. ix, 1.

truly points out, "there was nothing in the conduct of Constantius to induce Julian to believe that the honour done him would not turn out a snare, for the blood already spilt gave him cause to suspect."[1] But on second thoughts Julian's Messianic cast of mind came to the rescue, and he pulled himself together. The chosen of the Gods must go whither the Gods might send him: their wisdom was all-seeing, and he must accept the task which they now laid upon his shoulders. Who was he to deprive the Gods of his services, and not to trust himself to their right to dispose of his life as they thought fit?[2]

At Milan Julian had to part with his cherished philosopher's beard, which aroused the merriment of the smooth-faced courtiers. A purple robe that had belonged to his grandfather, the good Emperor Constantius Chlorus, was placed upon his shoulders, and amid scenes of unbounded enthusiasm, Constantius on 6th November, 355—it was Julian's twenty-fourth birthday—in one of those artful speeches which he knew so well how to make, presented him to the troops as Caesar of the West. "This Julianus here, mine uncle's son by the father's side, well approved (as ye know well enough) for his modesty, in regard whereof, as well as of nearness in blood, he is dear unto us; a young gentleman of industrious action, which already appeareth in him, I wish to join with me in the place and power of a Caesar: which motion of mine, if you think the same profitable and expedient, is to be confirmed also by your grant and allowance."[3] Driving back to the palace in the same chariot with the Emperor, through the long lines of cheering soldiery and the no less enthusiastic townsfolk, the young student, thus suddenly snatched away from his books to assume a post of high and urgent public responsibility, repeated under his breath the verse of Homer, which his ready wit, punning on the Imperial robe, invested with a new and sinister meaning:—

"τὸν δὲ κατ' ὄσσε
ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή."[4]

"By purple death and fate resistless seized."

[1]Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, § 32; King, *Julian the Emperor*, p. 132.
[2]*Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, pp. 258-64.
[3]Ammian, Bk. XV, Chap. viii, 5: Philemon Holland's translation, 1609, p. 44.
[4]*Iliad*, Bk. V, vv. 82-3.

In sober truth Julian's position could only be regarded as hazardous in the extreme. "Dragged from the schools into the din of arms," as Libanius phrases it; without any practical knowledge of life; unskilled in war, unversed in government; ignorant of, or at least unschooled in, the Latin language[1] which alone was spoken in the west; surrounded also by open and secret enemies, and insanely distrusted by the jealous Emperor; the uncouth, dreamy bookworm whose whole life had hitherto been spent in a rather vapid contemplation of the past glories of Greece, now found himself at his cousin's *fiat* a ruler of great provinces, a marshal charged with the conduct of a formidable campaign. Moreover, it was characteristic of Constantius that although he had nerved himself to make his cousin Caesar, he would not trust him completely or invest him with adequate authority. Indeed "the clogging burden of a guilty soul" seems to have incurably poisoned the Emperor's whole outlook towards his only remaining relative. Knowing what very good reason Julian had to detest him, Constantius could never bring himself to overcome the feelings of reluctance and apprehension with which he had entrusted military power to the young Caesar. Julian himself most bitterly describes how the Emperor deprived him of all his personal friends, and surrounded him with avowed spies. "I was sent," he tells us, "not as commander of the garrisons in Gaul, but rather as subordinate of the generals there. For express orders had been given them to watch me as vigilantly as they did the enemy."[2] To complete his humiliation, on all official occasions he was forced to appear in public wearing a purple robe on which was embroidered a portrait of his cousin—as if the wretched Caesar were merely a clothes-horse for the display of the mantle which was the symbol of Imperial power! It was not until the early spring of 357 that he was at last entrusted with something like adequate civil authority and military command.

The argument sometimes used in defence of Constantius, namely, that he could not be expected at once to entrust supreme power to one so young and untried, is an argument which recoils on itself: in that case Constantius should never have made him Caesar at all. The

[1] See on this subject Paul Allard, *Julien l'Apostat*, Vol. I, pp. 276-7.
[2] *Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 266: *cf.* Zosimus, Bk. III, Chap. ii.

situation was a desperate one, demanding desperate remedies. Had Constantius been cast in a generous, or even in an honest mould, and had his conscience in respect of Julian been clean, he would have seen to it that, once he had taken his decision to invest his cousin with the status of Caesar, adequate power and a free hand should be given him, and the world at large clearly acquainted with the fact that he enjoyed the full confidence of the Emperor and that the rank of Caesar would carry with it, as usual, the amplest powers of a viceroy. As it was, his humiliating treatment of Julian was as unwise in policy as it was mean in spirit. In a critical situation it had all the disadvantages of a half-measure, combined with the much more radical defect of dishonesty in purpose. It is not by such means that Empires are snatched from ruin.

Before his departure (1st December, 355) Julian received the hand of the Emperor's sister, Helen, a lady considerably older than himself. Together they had six years of wedded life, Helen dying, fortunately for herself, just at the moment when her brother and her husband were on the brink of civil war. The austere and philosophic Caesar, absorbed in his books and his dreams when not engaged in the camp or the council chamber, seems to have had little tenderness for the woman to whom he was joined for purely political reasons. She is rarely mentioned in his writings, and appears to have exercised no influence on his life. From his patron, Eusebia, herself a woman of high culture,[1] Julian before setting out received the most welcome gift of a library, so that in his own enthusiastic words, "she made the country of the Celts resemble a Greek temple of the Muses."[2]

[1] Zosimus, Bk. III, Chap. i.
[2] *Panegyric in Honour of Eusebia*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 328.

III.

Τὰ μὲν οὖν εὐτεῦθεν ἄχρι παντὸς τοῦ βίου Ἰουλιανῷ πραχθέντα συγγραφεῦσι καὶ ποιηταῖς ἐν πολυστίχοις γέγραπται βίβλοις, εἰ καὶ μηδεὶς τῶν συγγεγραφότων τῆς ἀξίας τῶν ἔργων ἐφίκετο.

—Zosimus, Bk. III, Chap. ii.

Τὰ μὲν γὰρ πλεῖστα τῶν ἔργων, σχεδὸν δὲ πάντα, τύχη καὶ δορυφόροι καὶ στρατιωτῶν φάλαγγες καὶ τάξεις ἱππέων συγκαθορθοῦσι, τὰ δε τῆς ἀρετῆς ἔργα μόνου τέ ἐστι τοῦ δράσαντος, καὶ ὁ ἐκ τούτων ἔπαινος ἀληθὴς καθεστὼς ἴδιός ἐστι τοῦ κεκτημένου.

—Julian, *Panegyric in Honour of Constantius*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 12.

THE six years of Julian's rule as Caesar in Gaul form an outstanding episode in his life, and rank as one of the most brilliant chapters in the history of the Roman Empire. The student's gown was thrown aside, and there stood forth the mailed figure of a hero, laying an unfaltering hand upon the realities of life. Before an astounded world the shy and awkward scholar was transformed into a great soldier and leader of men, a vigorous and humane governor, an upright judge, a tireless reformer, *restitutor orbis*. When Julian took over the sorely-frayed reins of power, the condition of Gaul seemed desperate indeed. The Rhine frontier had fallen, the German swarms had sacked or destroyed Andernach, Bingen, Bonn, Brumath, Coblenz, Mainz, Neuss, Remagen, Selz, Speier, Strasbourg, Trier, Worms, Saverne and many lesser places, and had penetrated far into the *hinterland*, extending their raids beyond the Marne and the Seine, even to the gates of Autun, and spreading a broad zone of devastation from Basel to the North Sea. Over forty towns in all, not counting purely military stations and places of minor consequence, had been sacked—so Julian himself informs us. The very first news that he heard, on setting out to take up his command—before even he had crossed the Alps—was that of the total destruction of the great frontier fortress of Cologne, *ampli*

nominis urbem, the most important town in Lower Germany. Only one tower of its *enceinte*, Julian would be told, had been left erect. Well might he cry, and cry again, in a momentary access of despair, that his new dignity meant nothing better for him than a more laborious death than might otherwise have been his lot.[1] Such towns within the war-zone as had escaped destruction had been forced to jettison their widely spread and highly embellished suburbs, and huddled themselves anxiously within the narrow limits of the fortified cinctures that were so largely constructed during this terrible period—a process in which we may recognise the beginning of those congested and insanitary conditions that were to mark the burghal life of the Middle Ages.[2]

In his *Funeral Oration* upon Julian the sophist Libanius has a striking "purple patch" descriptive of the appalling state of the provinces which the young Caesar was despatched to save. "Villages," he writes, "are destroyed; walls battered down, property carried off; women and children and magistrates followed the train, carrying—poor wretches!—their own goods upon their shoulders; whilst he that would not submit to be a slave, seeing his wife and daughter a prey to violence, wept and slew himself; and after our goods had been transported to the enemies' country, the conquerors cultivated our land with their own hands, and their own territory by the hands of their captives. And again, those towns that had escaped sacking through the strength of their walls, had no land except an extremely small portion left for their support, and therefore were consumed by famine, and were driven to every possible resource for food, until they were reduced to so small a number of souls that their towns served them both for towns and fields, and the uninhabited part within the fortifications was sufficient to be cultivated; for the ox was yoked, the plough was dragged, the seed was cast, and the wheat ear sprung up,

[1] "*Quo maerore perculsus, velut primo adventantium malorum auspicio, murmurans querulis vocibus saepe audiebatur, nihil se plus adsecutum quam ut occupatior interiret*" —Ammian, Bk. XV, Chap. viii, 20.

[2] Viollet-le-Duc, in his *Annals of a Fortress* (transl. B. Bucknall), Chap. vii, has given, in his imaginary case of the city of *Abonia*, fortified by Julian during his Caesarate in Gaul, an excellent description of those processes of contraction and consolidation which the towns in the Gallic war-zone underwent at this period.

and the reaper, the thresher, and all such-like occupations were seen within the city gates; so that one would not have said that those carried away captive were any more to be pitied than those left at home."[1]

Scandalously ill-equipped and for years unpaid, the army was utterly disorganised, and its *morale* had completely broken down: "*vulneribus declinandis intenti,*"[2] so Ammian pungently stigmatises the Gallic troops on one occasion—surely the most damning comment that ever a soldier has passed upon soldiers! Disbanded men and deserters eked out a living as brigands, and in their insolence spared not to terrorise even the larger towns. To crown the military collapse, the administrative system also was in utter chaos. All was consternation, mistrust and confusion. In the striking phrase of Ammian, "there was nothing left but tears and frights, where both the remembrance of calamities past was grievous, and the expectation of those at hand more woeful."[3] Among his own staff, all creatures of Constantius, the young Caesar again and again found want of support, not to speak of active treachery: so that, in the strong phrase of a contemporary panegyrist, he had to wage a ceaseless struggle against foes without and corruption within.[4]

Yet in four masterly campaigns Julian by a skilful use of interior lines, after much hard fighting cleared the country and restored the demolished towns and fortresses: he revived the *morale* of the army, "*vetus illa Romana virtus et sobria,*"[5] re-established the administration, and slowly but surely brought back public confidence and prosperity. In the picturesque language of Ammian, he "gathered up the broken fragments of the province."[6] His operations against the

[1] *Funeral Oration*, §§ 34-5: trans. King, *Julian the Emperor*, p. 133; *cf.* Mamertinus, *Juliano Augusto Gratiarum Actio pro Consulatu*, Chap. iv.

[2] Ammian, Bk. XV, Chap. iv, 7.

[3] "*Nihil praeter lacrimas supererat et terrores; ubi et praeteritorum recordatio erat acuta, et expectatio tristior impendentium*"—Ammian, Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 25; Holland, p. 270.

[4] "*Perpetuum professus, aut contra hostem aut contra vitia certamen*"—Mamertinus, *op. cit.*, Chap. iv.

[5] Ammian, Bk. XV, Chap. iv, 3.

[6] *Colligere provinciae fragmenta*—Bk. XVI, Chap. i, 1; Holland, p. 52.

Germans culminated during the hot August of 357 in the great battle of Argentoratum (Strasbourg), where Julian with a force of only 13,000 completely defeated a German army 35,000 strong, their King Chnodomar, *princeps audendi periculosa,* being taken prisoner and sent by Julian to Constantius as "the messenger of his own downfall." This splendid victory, which left a deep mark on the history of the Western Empire, was the result not merely of the most resolute and skilful tactical handling on the battlefield, but also of a boldly conceived, well thought out, and powerfully executed strategic plan. By means of a vast enveloping movement, Julian, pivoting his striking columns on well-chosen fortified positions, had forced the scattered plundering Allemannic hordes to concentrate themselves into a field army, the utter defeat of which at Strasbourg dealt an instantly ruinous blow at their power, such as no cumulation of minor successes could possibly have achieved. Four times thereafter the young Caesar crossed the Rhine, penetrating in 359 as far as the neighbourhood of Hall in Würtemberg. The utmost calamities of fire and sword were retaliated unsparingly upon the Teuton homesteads: 10,000 prisoners were taken; Julian liberated 20,000 provincials who had been carried into bondage; and compelled the barbarians to furnish not only provisions for his army but also timber and iron, with the necessary transport, to be used in rebuilding the Gallic towns. Permanent posts were garrisoned beyond the Rhine to secure the river line for transport. A fleet of 600 sail—all except 200 built for the purpose—was collected in order to bring British corn over to the devastated areas.[1] By rigorous economy taxation was reduced to less than a third of its previous burden, and its incidence was equalised as far as might be—Ammian tells us how on one occasion Julian rejected a proposed concession because it would benefit only the wealthy and not the poor. Justice was purified: *defensione innocentiae respirante,* says the historian finely of

[1] P. C. Baur, O.S.B., *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit*, Vol I, p. 41, sums up Julian's heroic deliverance of Gaul as "a series of cheap victories won over Germanic tribes unskilled in war!" The extraordinary caricature of Julian which this writer has presented to his readers is the great blot on an otherwise valuable work, and shows how prejudice can still in this twentieth century pervert the character of the Apostate. It makes one recall Andrew Lang's comparison of persistent Scottish Presbyterian disparagement of Montrose to the "sullen drippings from a cottage thatch which, in time of thaw, descend and stain the whiteness of the snow."

Julian's times.[1] Above all, the sternly upright young ruler gave short shrift to the hordes of informers who incessantly besieged his ear. "Will anyone ever be found guilty, great Caesar," cried one of these creatures on a certain occasion, "if it be enough to deny the charge?" "Can anyone ever be accounted innocent, if it be enough that a charge is made?" was Julian's quiet retort. It must have been such experiences as these that moved him on one occasion to write:—"What a terrible thing is slander! How truly does it devour the heart and wound the soul, as iron cannot wound the body!"[2]

This is the grandest and most inspiring period of Julian's unhappy life, his rule in afflicted Gaul. Truly in majestic fashion he revived the ideal of the old Romans, who—as Virgil proudly said—were not merely great in arms but foremost in the ordering of civil life:—

"Romanos rerum dominos gentemque togatam."

Against great odds he bare up the war, and amid all its turmoils he reorganised the administration and revived the social life of the provinces entrusted to his care. In that select list of stalwart Constables of France which culminates in Foch, Julian's must be enrolled as the first and not the least glorious name. He waged not war but victory, onlookers said with a gasp of admiration. More than two centuries earlier, Hadrian had finely stated the current conception of Imperial stewardship: the ruler exists to serve the State, not the State to serve the ruler. It was left for Julian as Caesar in the west to give to this noble ideal perhaps the best practical expression that the history of the Empire can show. The principles which governed the young Vice-Emperor's administration are thus set forth by his admirer, Ammian:—"that no man should be surcharged with the burden of tribute; that no one man's greatness or power should overweigh and oppress another, nor they be in place of authority whose private estate grew by the fall and decay of the common weal; ne yet that any judge should without punishment swerve from equity."[3]

[1] Ammian, Bk. XXX, Chap. iv, 1.

[2] *The Heroic Deeds of Constantius*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 254.

[3] *"Diligenter observans, ne quem tributorum sarcina praegravaret, neve potentia praesumeret aliena, aut ii versarentur in medio, quorum patrimonia publicae clades augebant, vel iudicium quisquam ab aequitate deviaret impune"*—Ammian, Bk. XVIII, Chap. i, 1. This is one of not a few passages where the stilted rhetoric of the historian, under the stress of his enthusiasm, is exchanged for a classic terseness and power. The translation is from Holland, p. 104.

We get a glimpse of the incredible difficulties that Julian had to overcome, in his efforts to restore the common decencies of government, in a letter written to his friend the physician Oribasius. Most indignantly Julian describes the struggle which he waged against the wicked corruption of his Chancellor, Florentius[1]—an "expert in robbery," Libanius calls him. "The Gods know," Julian exclaims, "that often when he wronged the provincials I kept silence, at the price of my own honour; to some charges I would not listen, others I would not admit, others again I did not believe, while in some cases I attributed the mischief making to his associates. But when he thought fit to make me an accomplice in such infamy by sending me to sign those shameful and wholly abominable reports, what was the right thing for me to do? Was I to remain silent, or to stand out against him? The former course was foolish, servile, and odious to the Gods; the latter was just, manly, and liberal, but was not open to me on account of the circumstances in which I was placed. What then did I do? In the presence of many persons who I knew would hand on my remark to him, I said 'Our friend will most certainly have to revise his reports, for they pass the bounds of decency.' When he heard of this, he so far forgot himself as to perpetrate things which, by Heaven, no ruler with any sense of moderation would have done, and that too though I was so near where he was. In such a case what was the proper conduct for a zealous student of Plato and Aristotle? Ought I to have looked on while the wretched people were being betrayed to thieves, or to have aided them as far as I could—they who already were singing their swan song because of the criminal artifices of such blackguards? To me it seems disgraceful that while I punish my military tribunes if they desert their post—and indeed they ought to be killed at once, and not even granted burial—yet I should myself desert my own post, which is for the defence of these unfortunates. Nay, rather is it my bounden duty to fight against thieves like Florentius, especially when I have God on my side—for it was He who placed me here. If any harm to myself should result, I have at all events the consolation of a clean conscience."[2]

[1] *Praefectus praetorio Galliarum.*

[2] *Letter to Oribasius*, Wright, Vol. III, pp. 10-12.

Amid these stirring scenes and superhuman labours Julian's private life was organised on the most austere pattern of Platonic virtue. *Opum contemptor, mortalia cuncta despiciens,*[1] he lived in the ordinary routine of the camp, shared the rough fare of his soldiers, and slept on the floor in an army blanket. Having acquired by rigid self-discipline the art of waking at whatever hour he desired, at midnight he rose, and after a brief prayer to Hermes busied himself on affairs of State, spending the hours of early dawn in the study of philosophy and history, or the composition of rhetorical exercises like his two Panegyrics on Constantius — an official duty demanded by his circumstances and the custom of the age—or the enthusiastic hymn in praise of his patron Eusebia, of whom he finely writes that "when first I came into her presence it seemed to me as though I beheld a statue of Modesty set up in a temple."[2] No wonder that the hard untutored legionaries adored their young prince, whose studious habits they viewed with uncomprehending respect, but whose readiness to share every stress and peril of a soldier's lot won their hearts and wrought them up into a pitch of enthusiasm for their chief, in which we discern a main secret of Julian's success in war.[3] Not only for his troops—who, truth to tell, were largely of Germanic stock—but also for his Gallic subjects Julian soon came to feel the warmest regard. "There I met with temperaments that know not how to pay court and flatter," he pointedly told the *frondeuse* Antiochenes in after years: "who knew only how to behave simply and frankly to all men alike."[4]

In his second Panegyric on Constantius, above referred to, Julian turns to good account the distasteful duty of praising up his eminently unheroic and unamiable cousin, by very cleverly making his composition the vehicle of an elaborate theoretical essay upon king-craft. Hence in this work we possess, set out in a formal treatise, a statement of the high conception of sovereignty which Julian put so nobly into practice during his rule in Gaul. The ideal monarch, says

[1] Ammian, Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 7.

[2] *Panegyric in Honour of Eusebia*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 326.

[3] Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, § 20, testifies Julian to have been *πρὸς φίλτρον εὖ πεφυκέναι*. Yet A. T. Lyttleton (*Modern Poets of Faith, Doubt and Paganism*, p. 250) could write of Julian's "lack of power to attract or influence others!" "The magic of his personality was irresistible to all who came in contact with him," much more truly says A. Fitzgerald, *The Essays and Hymns of Synesius*, Vol. I, p. 50.

[4] *Misopogon*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 480.

Julian, is devout towards the Gods, knowing that from them all human happiness derives; he is dutiful towards his parents, friendly to his kinsmen, gentle and considerate to strangers and suppliants. He will govern his subjects for their own highest good, and will seek to be accounted rich not in gold and silver but in their good will and honest service. War for its own sake he will avoid, but if attacked he will defend himself strenuously and bravely, and will be merciful in the hour of triumph, using his victory with moderation in a knightly way. He will care for his subjects as a shepherd cares for his flock: he will maintain his army in the highest efficiency, but will teach the soldiers to comport themselves as the protectors and not as the oppressors of the civilian population. He will constitute himself the guardian of domestic concord, of good morals and sober living; he will rigorously maintain existing laws, and will frame wisely new legislation to serve the changing circumstances. Justice tempered with mercy must be the end of all his actions: forgiveness rather than requital should ever be his aim. In the selection of men for the civil services, the judiciary and the army, he will display the most anxious care. Above all he must sternly check all extravagance and laxity in administration. In this noble description of the ideal monarch we fail to recognise a portrait of Constantius: on the other hand we feel that Julian in Gaul approached wonderfully near to the lofty standard which he thus set before himself. In his detailed portrayal of the responsibilities of sovereignty, no less than in his discussion of its temptations, Julian seems to have been much influenced by the subtle character-study of a monarch, noble alike in his virtues and in his weaknesses, which Sophocles had given to the world, seven centuries before, in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. The catastrophe of Oedipus—"the child of luck," as he had defiantly vaunted himself to be — made him for all time a warning of the need for that *σωφροσύνη* which is the keynote of Julian's ideal. Good luck, says Julian, may ensure us prosperity for a moment, but the blessings which it brings can be preserved only by wisdom.[1] With how tragic a fatality the Apostate's own career was destined to point the truth of his moralising!

[1] *Panegyric in Honour of Constantius*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 120. See a most interesting discussion of the current ideas about kingcraft in the later Roman Empire, and their relation to the masterpiece of Sophocles, in J. T. Sheppard's edition of the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Appendix, pp. 172-6.

Out of the heroic canvas of Julian's Caesarate in Gaul I select a little vignette that strikingly self-reveals the character of the man. He is describing whimsically a mishap that occurred to him one winter at Paris—of which town incidentally he gives us our earliest glimpse in a very charming word picture. "I happened to be in winter-quarters," he writes, "at my beloved Lutetia—for that is how the Celts call the capital of the Parisii. It is a small island in the river; a wall entirely surrounds it, and wooden bridges lead across to it on both sides. The river seldom rises and falls, but usually is the same depth in winter as in summer, and it provides water which is very clear and pleasant to drink: for since the inhabitants live on an island they have to draw their water chiefly from the river. The winter too is rather mild there, perhaps from the warmth of the ocean, which is not more than nine hundred stades distant, and it may be that a slight breeze from the ocean is wafted so far: for sea water seems to be warmer than fresh. Whether from this or some other cause obscure to me, the fact is as I say, that those who live in that place have a warmer winter. A good vine grows thereabouts, and some have even managed to make fig-trees grow by covering them in winter with skeps of straw, and with protections such as are used to shield trees from the cold wind. The winter was more severe than usual, and the river kept bringing down blocks of ice like marble. You know the white Phrygian stone; the blocks of ice were very like it, of great size, and drifted down one after another—in fact, it seemed likely they would make an unbroken path and bridge the stream. The room where I slept was not warmed in the way usual there, I mean by central heating; and that too although it was conveniently arranged for letting in heat in this way. For I wished to accustom myself to bear the cold without needing any such aid: and though the winter continually increased in severity, I did not allow my servants to put on the heating, because I was afraid to draw out the dampness in the walls; instead I ordered them to carry in fire that had burned down and to place in my room a very moderate number of hot coals. But the coals, though there were not many of them, brought out from the walls quantities of steam and made me faint. And since my head was filled with the fumes, I almost choked. Then I was carried outside, and as the doctors advised me to throw

up the food I had just swallowed—and it was little enough, by Zeus!—I vomited it, and at once became easier, so that I had a more comfortable night, and next day could do what I pleased."[1]

That Julian's illness had been more severe than he in later days recollected appears from a letter written thereafter to the sophist Priscus, which may be quoted as an example of his epistolary style, and in proof of his warmly impulsive friendships.

"I had only just recovered by the providence of the All-seeing One from a very severe and sharp attack of sickness when your letters reached my hands, on the very day when I took my first bath. It was already evening when I read them, and it would be hard for you to tell how my strength began to return when I realised your pure and sincere affection. May I become worthy of it, that I may not shame your love for me! Your letters I read at once, though I was not well able to do so, but those of Antonius to Alexander I stored up for the next day. On the seventh day from their receipt I began to write this to you, since my strength is improving reasonably well, thanks to Divine Providence. May the All-seeing God preserve you, my dearest and best beloved brother. May I see you, my treasure!"

To this letter, when the draft was brought to him for signature, he added a postscript in his own hand:—

"I swear by your well being and my own, by the All-seeing God, that I really feel as I have written. Best of men, when shall I be able to see you and embrace you? For already, like a doting lover, I adore your very name!"[2]

In a few short years Julian as ruler in the west had wrought a transformation truly marvellous. No more was there leading into captivity or complaining in the streets. Happy are the people that are in such a case; "they rejoiced," says Ammian, "with cheerful mirth and dancing, as if the clear sun after ugly darkness had shone upon them."[3] "Now the town halls were filled," cries Libanius: "population, trade, and revenue grew apace, and betrothals and marriages, journeyings, feasts and forgatherings resumed their former order."[4] Those over whom Julian thus benignly ruled could hardly fail to contrast their present enviable circumstances with the miseries under which they had languished during the sole reign of Constantius, and

[1] *Misopogon*, Wright, Vol. II, pp. 428-32.
[2] Wright, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 14-16.
[3] Ammian, Bk. XVI, Chap. v, 14; Holland, p. 57.
[4] *Funeral Oration*, § 80; transl. C. W. King in *Julian the Emperor*, p. 147.

openly or secretly to cherish the hope that at some not distant date the brilliant young Caesar might ascend the Imperial throne itself. Julian could not have been ignorant of such wishes, and we can scarcely doubt that in his inmost heart he shared them. Indeed, in a letter to his physician, Oribasius, he has uncovered his secret hopes in the guise of a dream, in which he avers that he saw the House of Constantine like unto a tall tree now prostrate on the ground, whilst he himself, as a young suckling of the parent stem, remained upright and vigorously growing.[1] There was no impatient cry such as that attributed under similar circumstances to Galerius—"*Quousque tandem Caesar?*" there was merely, shall we say, a still small hope, which events were to bring into fulfilment in a manner earlier perhaps, and certainly more unpleasant, than Julian would have wished.

While his Caesar covered himself with glory in the west, and drew the eyes of the whole Roman world upon his heroic exploits, in the east Constantius struggled ignominiously with the obstinate Persian war. Says Libanius of Julian at an earlier date, though his words seem applicable rather to this time: "the wish was growing strong in the bosoms of all educated men, that the world should be cured of its distresses through the man's prudence."[2] *Prohibili sermones ideoque plures,* Tacitus cynically reminds us; and so, as these opinions in regard to Julian were more and more bruited abroad, the jealous soul of the Emperor waxed daily more and more resentful of his cousin's prowess. His benign consort, Eusebia, was now dead, and there was no other friend of Julian at Court to counter the evil rumours that the eunuchs insidiously whispered into the "sacred" ears. Four years ago the raw undergraduate might safely have been derided as a "book-worm Greek;" but now the hero of Strasbourg, *restitutor Galliarum,* was very decidedly a person to be reckoned with. In the eyes of the eunuchs, the cooks and the bottle-washers, he was becoming dangerous. Out of such a poisoned atmosphere arose the Emperor's decision, towards the end of 359, to requisition a large contingent of Julian's finest troops for the Persian campaign. Four of his crack regiments, and 300 soldiers skimmed from each of the other units—such

[1] *Letter to Oribasius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 8.
[2] *Funeral Oration*, § 24, trans. King, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

was the modest demand of Constantius. Having regard to the fact that Gaul was now supposed to be pacified, and bearing in mind the seriousness of the Persian war, we may concede that his action was in principle not unreasonable;[1] although Julian tells us that he had already sent Constantius seven regiments of infantry and two of cavalry—that is, about 5,000 men. But the secret malice of the Emperor's motive is exposed both by his excessive requisition, which would have deprived Gaul of its best troops, and, above all, by the fact that he sent staff officers of his own to carry out his orders over the Caesar's head. In just the same way—Julian could hardly fail to remember—his brother, Gallus, had been stripped of his troops as a prelude to his destruction.

The arrival at Paris of the Emperor's agents placed Julian at once in a situation of the most exquisite delicacy and of the utmost mental anguish. To obey seemed impossible: he could not leave the Gallic provinces defenceless: and in any case the troops themselves—blindly devoted to their young Caesar who had led them time and again to victory, and possessing no confidence whatever in the military talents of Constantius—roundly declared that they would not march. Ammian tells us further that some of the mercenaries included in the Emperor's requisition had enlisted under a promise not to employ them beyond the Alps. Very probably Constantius was quite unaware of any such condition: but in the eyes of the troops concerned his conduct was simply a blatant breach of faith. To add to Julian's anxiety, alike in the civil and in the military departments he was without advice: Lupicinus, his Chief of Staff,[2] was absent in Britain, and the scoundrelly Chancellor, Florentius, had conveniently disappeared. In his great distress Julian at first offered to abdicate: then, after a sharp inward struggle, he determined to do what he could to carry out the Imperial orders. We have Julian's own version of what followed, and it is confirmed in every detail by all our other authorities.

[1] The case for Constantius is well set forth by Allard, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 479-81. It is only fair to him to remember that in the result Julian, when he marched against his cousin, was able to dispose of an army of 23,000 men without unduly weakening the Rhine defences: although, on the other hand, we must note that after his rebellion Julian strengthened his forces by new drafts and levies.

[2] *Magister Militum per Gallias.*

Against the Caesar's urgent advice, the envoys of Constantius with almost incredible folly arranged that the drafted regiments should be concentrated in a great camp outside Paris. Having exhorted the men to remain loyal to the Emperor, Julian entertained the officers to a farewell dinner in his palace. But that night the troops rose, and pouring across the bridges into the city surrounded the palace, instant with loud voices—vehemently raising the fateful cry of salutation to a new Emperor: *"Iuliane Auguste, tu vincas!"* Behind the locked door of his private chamber, Julian, in extreme agony of mind, fell upon his knees and strove in prayer with Zeus. Every instinct of soldierly duty and loyalty, all the finer elements in his upright character, would combine in urging him to be true to Constantius. But then . . . his knowledge of his cousin's worthlessness, of his dastard villainy towards himself and his kindred; his conviction of his own moral superiority and far greater talents; his sympathy with his soldiers and with the provincials whom Constantius appeared resolved to sacrifice; his long-established consciousness of a divine mission to restore the ancient faith to which his whole being was now dedicated in passionate devotion; the whispered promptings of merely human ambition . . . who shall say what complex tumult of thought and motive raged in that lonely, tortured soul during those fateful moments, while outside his palace in the darkness the lanterns wildly tossed and the maddened soldiery surged, with ever growing insistence vociferating the Imperial acclamation? In this supreme crisis of his life his weakness was simply that shown by Pilate of old: he saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made. Let those condemn Julian who will: but let us at all events first hear him in his own defence. Assuredly he does not speak to us with the accents of a knave and a liar; nor does anything we know about the man encourage us to believe that he was such. In the most solemn tones he protests his utter innocence of any conspiracy against the Emperor. "I knew nothing whatever," he assures us, "of what the soldiers had determined; I call to witness Zeus, Helios, Ares, Athene, and all the other Gods that no such suspicion entered my mind until that very evening. . . . My wife was still alive, and in order to rest alone I had gone to an upper room near hers. From there through a window I prayed to

Zeus. Meantime the shouting grew louder, and all was in a tumult in the palace. I entreated the God to give me guidance, and he bade me yield and not oppose myself to the eager wishes of the army. Even then I did not yield without reluctance, and would not accept either the acclamation or the diadem. Yet I could not single handed control so many, and moreover the Gods, who willed that this should happen, spurred on the soldiers and gradually wore down my resolution. So about the third hour, when a soldier—I know not who—gave me his collar, I put it on my head, and returned to the palace, the Gods know groaning in my heart."[1]

The ample and well-balanced narrative of Ammian supplies us with a number of additional particulars, of which the most interesting is the fact that the excited soldiery raised their new Emperor aloft on a shield and thus displayed him to the townsfolk. Very clearly we have here the picture of a thoroughly Teutonic *Schilderhebung,* which affords significant proof of the extent to which the Roman army had by this time become Germanised. Libanius says that the soldiers actually smashed in the barred door of Julian's room and dragged him out. Julian himself ascribes their sudden uprising to an anonymous pamphlet which had been circulated among them, accusing Constantius of the wilful sacrifice of Gaul. Its defenders, who had redeemed their native soil on a score of battlefields, were to be exiled to the farthest ends of the earth, while their dear ones, and the provincials whom their valour had saved, would be exposed to the unresisted fury of the Germans. Not impossibly this pamphlet may have been drawn up by Julian's physician, Oribasius, as one ancient source ascribes to this man the responsibility for the Caesar's dramatic elevation to supreme power.[2] It is perhaps significant that it was Oribasius to whom Julian had communicated his dream about the decay of the parent branch of his house while he himself, as a young seedling, continued to flourish. But we shall never know all the truth, which is probably best summed up in the characteristic judgment of Gibbon, who, in describing Julian's long-protracted refusal to accept the honour thrust upon him by the mutinous regiments, comments thus: "prudence as well as loyalty

[1] *Letter to the Athenians*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 282.
[2] See Koch, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

inculcated the propriety of resisting their treasonable designs, and of preparing for his oppressed virtue the excuse of violence."[1]

This memorable and momentous scene took place at Paris in the month of February, 360. For Julian the die was cast: but his first acts towards Constantius were conceived in a spirit of studied moderation. He wrote to the Emperor, still signing himself as Caesar; gave an account of what had happened; and demanded that his cousin should now accept the *fait accompli*. "This is the very order and manner of my proceedings, which I beseech you to entertain with a peaceable and gentle construction; neither think that anything hath been done otherwise, nor admit malicious persons and evil-willers, ready to whisper in your ears pernicious matters—such, I mean, as are wont for their own gain and advantage to make debate and variance between princes; but putting aside flattery, the very nurse of vices, set your mind upon justice, the most excellent virtue of all others, and receive unfeignedly and *bona fide* these equal conditions which I propose unto you."[2] Julian was willing that the senior Emperor should continue to nominate the Praetorian Prefect or Civil Governor of Gaul; but all the other posts in the army and the civil service he would retain in his own control. On his side he undertook to send a yearly draft of troops to his cousin, and concluded his letter by expressing the fervent hope that the two Augusti might work together for the good of the Empire.

Constantius was at Caesarea, on the upper waters of the Halys in Cappadocia, when Julian's letter reached him. Forsaking his usual studied reserve, he burst into a violent passion of mingled anger and alarm. "White with fear and hatred," his first impulse was to march forthwith against his rebellious cousin: then the thought of the Persians, who had now overrun Roman Mesopotamia, and threatened to cross the Euphrates, stayed his ardour; and he contented himself with dispatching a peremptory order to Julian to confine himself to the status of Caesar, and enclosing a complete list of new appointments to the chief military and civil posts in Gaul. True to his resolve of moderation, Julian in accordance with his own conditions accepted the

[1]Ed. Bury, Vol. II, p. 402.

[2]Julian to Constantius, letter in Ammian, Bk. XX, Chap. viii; Holland, p. 156.

nominee of Constantius for the Prefecture, but filled up the other vacancies with his own supporters. Few indeed could have blamed him had he now marched upon Constantinople. But Julian had scant desire to involve the Empire in a bloody and doubtful civil war. With Theognis he might well reflect that "danger lies in wait upon every action, and no man knows at the beginning of a deed where it will end." Moreover, there was still much to be done in Gaul. So instead he turned his arms once more against the Germans, crossed the Rhine for the fifth time, and in a brilliant campaign of three months spread terror and devastation anew among the barbarians. The cumulative result of Julian's operations against the Germans was that he left them thoroughly cowed. Of him alone among all they stood in fear, says Ammian,[1] and not until the news of his death reached them did any of their tribes dare to molest the Gallic provinces.

As yet Julian did not care to reveal his secret paganism, and at Vienne on 6th January, 361, he celebrated the Epiphany with all its usual pomp. The extremely delicate situation in which he was placed doubtless justified this hypocrisy from a political standpoint, but it certainly forms no creditable episode in Julian's career. It would seem that during this period sundry plots were made against his life by the partisans of Constantius, and Julian in a letter to Maximus ascribes to the "very presence of the Gods" his immunity from such attempts—"although I put no man to death, deprived no man of his property, and only imprisoned those whom I caught red-handed."[2] Elsewhere Julian has tersely described his relations with Constantius during this uneasy period as a "wolf's friendship."[3]

But in the summer of this year Julian gained knowledge of something which armed him to instant action against his cousin. Letters fell into his hands revealing the appalling fact that Constantius, blinded with rage and jealousy, was conspiring with the barbarians against him. He, the Roman Emperor, was inciting the Teuton

[1]Bk. XXX, Chap. vii, 4: "*quem post Constantem solum omnium formidabant.*" *Cf.* Zosimus, Bk. IV, Chaps. iii and ix.

[2]*Letter to Maximus*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 24.

[3]"λυκοφιλία"—*Letter to Philip*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 104.

hordes to invade Gaul and attack Julian.[1] Coming on top of much other information which Julian had already gathered as to military preparations on a great scale secretly carried out by Constantius along the trunk roads leading towards Gaul, this crowning revelation of his cousin's reckless treachery determined the Western Emperor to hesitate no longer. The soldiers who had refused to leave Gaul at the behest of Constantius now with one voice declared themselves ready to follow Julian to the uttermost ends of the earth; but of course he had to leave behind him ample provision to maintain the *Wacht am Rhein*. In August, 361, with 23,000 men he set out for Constantinople. His march was conceived with extraordinary boldness and skill, and was conducted with that "unparalleled velocity," that "vast celerity"[2] which is the hall-mark of Julian's generalship.[3] About all his military undertakings there is a *Hindenburgische Plötzlichkeit;* and his great converging march into Pannonia is the outstanding case in point. We see in it a combination of the most headstrong daring with the coolest calculation which is characteristically Julianic; he had himself compassed the matter in a nutshell in his speech to his troops before the "crowning mercy" of Strasbourg:—"for as in dangerous adventures meet it is there should be a forwardness of manhood and boldness; so, if occasion require, the same ought to be regible, advised, and

[1]Constantius had adopted the same ruinous policy in dealing with the usurper Magnentius—Zosimus, Bk. II, Chap. liii. And yet Mr. Baynes (*Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. I, p. 59) can discern in the reign of Constantius a "principle never to sacrifice the Empire to his own personal advantage," and says that "in the usurpations of Magnentius and of Julian he refused to hazard the safety of the provinces and loyally sacrificed all personal interests in face of the higher claims of his duty to the Roman world" (*ibid.*, p. 77). Incidentally, to class the usurpation of the adventurer Magnentius with the event at Paris in February, 360, is fair neither to Julian himself nor to the much provoked soldiery who lifted him on their shields.

It may be noted that precedent was not lacking to Constantius in his villainy. According to Zosimus, Bk. I, Chap. xxiii, Trebonianus Gallus had called in the Goths to assist him in his designs against Decius, an act of treachery that led to that Emperor's disaster in the Dobrudscha, A.D. 251. J. F. A. Mücke, *Flavius Claudius Julianus*, p. 5, has overlooked this earlier instance.

[2]"*Inopina velocitate*"—Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. ii, 5; *cf.* Gregory, *First Invective*, Chap. xlvii—*τάχει πολλῷ . . . διαδραμὼν . . . καὶ τῷ λαθεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ κρατῆσαι τὴν πάροδον ἐρράδιος.*

[3]"*Coniectans nihil tam convenire conatibus subitis quam celeritatem . . . expertus quid in rebus tumultuosis anteversio valeat ad praegressus*—Ammian, Bk. XXI, Chap. v, 1 and 13.

considerate."[1] One corps, forming the right wing of his army, passed through northern Italy. His centre traversed Rhaetia and Noricum. Julian, himself at the head of the left column, 3,000 strong, chose a route the daring novelty of which aroused awe-struck wonder throughout the world. Crossing the Rhine near Basel (*Augusta Rauracorum*), he plunged into the barbarian country, himself marching on foot at the head of his troops; forced his way amid the pine-clad fastnesses of the Black Forest, with the density of which he says nothing in the Roman Empire can be compared;[2] struck the sources of the Danube; descended that stream till it became navigable near Ulm; seized the Imperial flotilla on the river; embarked his troops; and, favoured by a western breeze, urged them with oar and sail swiftly down the mighty current. Traversing Europe in this fashion with the speed of life and death,[3] on 10th October he was before the gates of Mitrovitza (*Sirmium*) on the Save. So tremendous, and so utterly unexpected, had been the rapidity of his onrush—Ammian likens it to a burning arrow shot from a catapult—that the garrison, summoned to open their gates in the Emperor's name, complied at once in the blissful assurance that the Emperor was Constantius! Three days afterwards Julian had seized the famous pass of Succi, now *Traianova Vrata*, between Sardica and Philippopolis, which carried the great road over the Balkan Mountains into Thrace. Having secured this crucial post, which dominated the plain of the Maritza and the Adrianople-Constantinople road, Julian retired to Nish (*Naissus*, the birthplace of Constantine) to refresh his over-wrought troops, and to await the

[1]"*Ut enim in periculis iuventutem impigram esse convenit et audacem, ita cum res postulat, regibilem et consultam*"—Ammian, Bk. XVI, Chap. xii, 10; Holland, p. 69. This is one of the numerous passages which convinces us that the speeches which Ammian puts into Julian's mouth are in substance authentic, even if the rhetorical dressing-up belongs to the historian.

[2]Fragment 2 in Wright, Vol. III, p. 294.

[3]This famous march gives Gibbon (ed. Bury, Vol II, p. 411) the opportunity of making one of the finest of the many fine footnotes which enrich his pages. After alluding to the remark of Gregory, quoted above, he comments thus: "Even the Saint admires the speed and secrecy of his march. A modern divine might apply to the progress of Julian the lines which were originally designed for another apostate:—

'So eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies!'"

arrival of the other two columns. It had been an extraordinary march, and is deservedly ranked among the great military exploits of antiquity.

From Nish Julian, with characteristic archaism, addressed political manifestos to the Roman Senate, the Spartans, the Corinthians and the Athenians, of which the address to the last has survived, and is a prime authority for his motives and actions during this crucial period in his career. Eunapius, writing a generation after Julian's death, says that this letter proves its author to have been *βασιλικώτατος καὶ ἐν λόγοις*[1]; Gibbon[2] thought it "one of the best manifestos to be found in any language." From Nish also Julian wrote a letter to his friend the philosopher Maximus of Ephesus, by which it appears that he had now cast aside the hypocritical mask of Christianity that must have been repugnant to his upright soul. It was no longer needful for the lion to wear the ass's hide, says Libanius, inverting the fable of Æsop. "I worship the Gods openly," Julian writes in the fulness of joy: "and the whole of my army worships them too! I sacrifice oxen in public. I have offered to the Gods many hecatombs in thanksgiving. The Gods command me to restore their worship in all its purity, and I obey them with a good will."[3] "With victims and with sacrifices," sourly comments the Christian apologist, Gregory of Nazianzus, "he inaugurates his palace, using evil counsellors for an evil reign."[4]

At Edessa, far in the east, Constantius received the tidings of his cousin's masterful onrush. Opportunely the Persian armies had withdrawn across the Tigris, and so Constantius was enabled to direct his march towards the west in the hope that he might yet save his capital. He had taken energetic measures to secure his hold upon Africa, and thus was enabled to divert to Constantinople the corn dole destined for Rome, an action that threatened the most serious consequences for Julian, particularly as the Roman Senate were unfavourably disposed towards him.[5] It seemed as if the Empire trembled on the brink of a

[1] *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Part I, p. 64.

[2] Ed. Bury, Vol. II, p. 413, note 39.

[3] *Letter to Maximus*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 24.

[4] *First Invective*, Chap. lii; King, p. 30.

[5] The ancient capital was strongly on the side of Constantius, both now and during the rebellion of Magnentius. Zosimus, Bk. II, Chap. liii.

cruel and wasteful civil war. From all our accounts it is evident that Constantius, despite his crimes and failings, enjoyed a very large measure of support throughout the Empire, except in the western provinces over which Julian had ruled. Whether by reason of the legitimist ideas that had grown up insensibly under the Flavian dynasty, or perhaps from something likeable even in so sombre and repellent a personality, the last surviving son of the great Constantine was held in kindly regard by a large proportion of his subjects: even after his death, and that of his brilliant rival, we learn that his memory was cherished in the east.[1] The material resources at his command were far superior to those of Julian: and he could reflect that although his foreign wars had for the most part been unlucky, he had invariably triumphed in civil strife. Ammian tells us that Constantius and his *entourage* were confident of winning. In all the circumstances we cannot lightly assume that, had matters come to push of pike, the Western Emperor would have been the victor. Certainly Julian looked upon the situation, if not with fear, at all events with secret trouble. That he was preparing for a long struggle, involving amphibious operations against the Asiatic coast, seems clear from a letter written apparently from Nish, and addressed to a certain Maximin who is otherwise unknown, but who was evidently a military or naval commander in Aegean waters. The peremptory terseness of this letter, so different from Julian's wonted amplitude of diction, exposes the intense strain which he was undergoing at this time. "I have given orders," he writes, "to assemble ships at Cenchreae [on the Isthmus of Corinth]. The number of these you will learn from the Proconsul of Achaea; but as to how you will discharge your commission hear now from me. It must be without bribery and with no delay. With the help of the Gods I will personally see that you do not repent of so doing your duty."[2]

But Julian's anxieties and precautions were alike destined to be in vain. On his westward march Constantius was smitten with an ague which was aggravated by the disorders of his soul; and at Mopsucrene, near Tarsus in Cilicia, he died on 3rd November, 361—with his last

[1] *Cuius recordatio colebatur*, writes Ammian, *sub anno* 363—Bk. XXVI, Chap. vii, 10.

[2] Wright, Vol. III, p. 234.

breath commending the Empire to his cousin. He had lived for four and forty years; he had reigned for twenty-four; and before his life was closed he had most indubitably become filled with the fruit of his own devices. Like his father before him, on his deathbed he accepted baptism—a circumstance which, viewed against the background of the recorded lives of these two men, may well have inspired the bitter jibes which Julian later, in his allegory of the *Caesars,* was to hurl against the great Christian rite of forgiveness and cleansing.

When the unlooked-for news reached Julian he burst into tears. We may surely believe them to have been hysterical rather than merely sentimental, much less tears of the crocodile variety. The long weeks of cruel strain and anxious doubt—nay more, the years of self repression and dissimulation forced upon him since early youth — all this was now suddenly and unexpectedly over. One of the most remarkable phenomena in the highly complex personality of this young Emperor was his combination of great moral strength and inflexible tenacity of mind with a singularly emotional temper.

On 11th December, 361, Julian, like another Triptolemus, amid scenes of frantic rejoicing passed through the Golden Gate and entered Constantinople in triumph. The whole population, girt with gladness, turned out *en masse* to welcome the young warrior-hero of the west—"the conqueror of the Germans, the Allemans, and the Franks, the father of his country, the pious, the fortunate, the victorious, the honoured and ever triumphant Augustus"[1]—who at the age of thirty had already established so great a reputation as a soldier and a statesman. A few days later arrived all that was mortal of Constantius; and Julian—not deeming it right, says Libanius, to blame the body for the misdeeds of the soul — accorded it Christian burial with full Imperial pomp, himself the chief mourner. "Such as he was, he was," wrote Julian after; "may the earth rest light upon him."[2] Was it only a sad sneer? Or was it an expression of Christian feeling from the heart of one who with his lips had forsworn the Christ?

[1] "*Domino nostro imperatori Flavio Claudio Iuliano pio felici victori venerabili ac triumfatori semper Augusto, pontifico maximo, Germanico maximo, Alamanico maximo, Francico maximo, imperatori II, consuli III, patri patriae, proconsuli, recuperata republica*"—inscription from Sofia, cited by Baynes, *The Historia Augusta, its Date and Purpose*, p. 36.

[2] *Letter to Hermogenes*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 33.

On the funeral car perched that Jovian who was destined to be Julian's short-lived and inglorious successor: men afterwards, in the brief and gruesome notoriety which this utterly undistinguished guardsman thus obtained, recognised no inapt presage of his reign. Contemporary opinion, pagan and Christian alike, regarded the miserable end of Constantius as a divine punishment for the murder of his relatives with which his ill-starred reign had commenced. It was indeed a signal exemplification of the curse foretold by the ancient poet on those who slew their own kith:—

> "*χαλεπὰ γὰρ βροτοῖς ὁμογενῆ μιάσματ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν αὐτοφόνταις ξυνῳδὰ θεόθεν πίτνοντ' ἐπὶ δόμοις ἄχη.*[1]"

Julian's feelings on the unexpected news of his cousin's death are vividly portrayed to us in a hurried letter which he wrote from his camp at Nish to his maternal uncle, Count Julian. "The third hour of the night has just begun, and as I have no secretary to dictate to because they are all busy, I have with difficulty made the effort to write you this myself. I am alive, by the grace of the Gods, and have been freed from the necessity of either suffering or inflicting irreparable ill. But the Sun, whom of all the Gods I besought most earnestly to assist me, and Sovereign Zeus also, bear me witness that never for a moment did I wish to slay Constantius, but rather I wished the contrary. Why then did I come? Because the Gods expressly ordered me, and promised me safety if I obeyed them; but if I stayed, they said I should incur what I pray no God may do to me! Furthermore I came because, having been declared a public enemy, I meant to frighten him merely, and that our quarrel should result in intercourse on more friendly terms; but if we should have to decide the issue by battle, I meant to trust all to Fortune and the mercy of the Gods!"[2]

By the mercy of the Gods, then, the disciple of Plato at length was master of the world. How he planned to use his power we learn from a pleasing little parable in which he has enshrined his devout consciousness of his own mission, and has set forth the principles that would regulate his conduct: a parable which, as Gaetano Negri has truly said, contains "the expression of a lofty and pure sentiment that

[1] Euripides, *Medea*, vv. 1268-70.

[2] *Letter to his Uncle Julian*, Wright, Vol. III, pp. 26-8.

could only be possible to a soul profoundly sincere and alive to all that is good and beautiful."[1]

Julian begins by picturing his uncle, the Emperor Constantine, as a man of the world, who by force and lack of scruple has heaped together enormous wealth—surrounded by vast flocks and herds, his every want anticipated by countless slaves, complacent in his self-made prosperity, troubling himself little or not at all about reverence due to Higher Powers. On his death-bed he divides his goods among his three sons; but a dreadful strife arises among them, from which one emerges as sole survivor and lord of the entire inheritance. This, of course, is Constantius, whom Julian describes as continuing his father's wicked attitude of indifference towards the Gods, and as passing his days in careless sloth,[2] while dishonest shepherds—Julian means the bishops—waste their master's flocks. Pained and angered at the sight, Father Zeus bids his son, Helios, look where dwells obscurely an orphan child, the sole relative of the wicked lord of the inheritance, neglected and despised. It shall be the task of Helios, says Zeus, to foster and educate the forlorn lad. Helios seeks out the little Julian, and with the aid of wise Athene he takes in hand the boy's upbringing. When he has reached adolescence, by a series of miraculous manifestations, which Julian describes with vivid imagery, he is made aware of his exalted destiny, and is informed that Zeus has laid upon his shoulders the mighty burden of restoring the reign of piety upon earth. But the young Julian is vastly dismayed, and in an interview with Helios he pleads most earnestly to be allowed to dwell in peace in the bosom of Zeus. All his tears are vain: at length he accepts his fate, Helios and Athene arm him for his task, and he is dismissed with parting words of counsel in which we recognise Julian's own conception of his moral responsibility as Emperor. "Learn, O stripling, to distinguish the flatterer from the true counsellor: live as a friend among thy friends, and treat them not as slaves. Love and cherish thy subjects even as thou are beloved of Us on High. Be sober and just, and so shalt thou prosper in what thou hast to do, and when thy task is accomplished thou shall be enrolled among the Gods."[3]

[1] *Julian the Apostate*, Vol. I, p. 260.

[2] This is grossly unjust to Constantius, who, when not blinded by suspicion or envy, had a strong sense of duty and spent his life in incessant toil on behalf of the Empire.

[3] *To the Cynic Heraclius*, Wright, Vol. II, pp. 130-48.

PLATE III.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

Portrait from the obverse of a gold coin (*solidus*) in the Federal Collection of Coins and Medals, Vienna. Scale ⅔.

The Emperor is shown wearing the diadem and clad in armour, over which is the *paludamentum*. The inscription reads:—FL(*avius*) CL(*audius*) IVLIANVS P(*ater*) P(*atriae*) AVG(*ustus*).

This likeness should be compared with that of the Acerenza bust (*Frontispiece*). Later on, as shown on his coins struck at Antioch, Julian allowed his beard to grow into a point: *cf.* Ammian, bk. xxv, chap. iv, 22: "*hirsuta barba in acutum desinente vestitus.*"

For the art characteristics of the effigy see p. 4.

(*Reproduced from E. Stein, Geschichte des Spätrömischen Reiches, Vol. I, Plate 7, No. 1, by courtesy of Messrs. E. W. Seidel & Son, Vienna.*)

IV.

Tu, tu, inquam, maxime Imperator, exsulantes relegatasque virtutes ad rem publicam quodam postliminio reduxisti; tu exstincta iam literarum studia flammasti; tu philosophiam paullo ante suspectam ac nedum spoliatam honoribus, sed accusatam ac ream non modo iudicio liberasti, sed amictam purpura, auro gemmisque redimitam in regali solio collocasti.

—Mamertinus, *Iuliano Augusto Gratiarum Actio Pro Consulatu*, Chap. xxiii.

Those who have no other means for regenerating a corrupted time than dogmatic pedantries concerning the dead and unreturning past, must end, in practice, by borrowing insincerely, and using clumsily, the very weapons of that novel age which they deprecate, and "sewing new cloth into old garments," till the rent become patent and incurable.

—Charles Kingsley, *Hypatia*, Chap. xx.

THE first task of the new Emperor was to take order with the miserable creatures—"barbarians in mind and godless in soul,"[1] thus forcibly he describes them—who had been the tools and too often the contrivers of his predecessor's misdoing. In the Court of Constantius the wicked had walked on every side, and the vilest men were exalted: workers of iniquity who ate up the people as they ate bread. To deal with these a tribunal was set up across the straits at Chalcedon, and to avoid all suggestion of malice the Emperor kept apart from its deliberations, and allowed no appeal to himself from its findings. Unfortunately he appears to have been unwise in his choice of its personnel, so that although three of the worst scoundrels were given according to the wickedness of their endeavours, a grave miscarriage of justice, from which Julian cannot escape his share of responsibility, occurred in the condemnation of the Treasurer Ursulus, whose only fault seems to have been his unpopularity with the army, and who had assisted Julian during his Caesarate in Gaul. Justice herself wept over

[1] *Letter to the Jews*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 178.

his death and the Emperor's ingratitude revealed therein, is the strong comment of the honest Ammian. Julian himself never seems to have acknowledged any scruple in regard to any of these executions. "I seized them with my own hands," he wrote, "and put them to death by thrusting them into the pit, so that not even the memory of their wickedness might remain."[1] The cruel punishment which the Roman military code awarded to mutineers was inflicted upon the officers of two legions which, after taking the oath of fealty to Julian at Sirmium, had revolted and seized Aquileia—an act of treachery which, at the crisis of his operations against Constantius, had threatened disastrous interruption to his line of communications with Italy and the west. Otherwise Julian's triumph was a bloodless one. How little the young Emperor himself desired the destruction even of those who had wronged him personally most, is shown by his noble refusal to accept the offer of an informer who undertook to disclose to him the whereabouts of the wicked Florentius, whom the tribunal had condemned to death but who had managed to hide himself.

A few days after his arrival the Emperor sent for a barber to trim his philosopher's beard, which since he left Gaul had been suffered to grow again. A magnificent personage presented himself. "I asked for a barber, not for a Baron of the Exchequer,"[2] exclaimed Julian in surprise. His astonishment was not lessened when the gorgeous gentleman, having assured the Emperor that he really was his tonsorial adviser, confessed that he drew twenty rations of food per day, with a like amount for his stud of horses, besides a large salary and numerous "extras." This sensational discovery was followed by a general inquiry into the establishment of the palace, as a result of which Julian made a clean sweep of all the swarm of useless and corrupt officials who battened on the public revenues. A pungent description of these people is given us by Libanius, who remarks that "the grand resource for the lazy and clever at eating was to get themselves enrolled in the Imperial household—and the piece of gold quickly procured the enrolment," he adds. Their rapacity he describes as something beyond all toleration: "ancient cities were plundered, and beautiful things that had vanquished time were brought across the seas, in order to make the houses of fuller's sons more gay than the Imperial palace."[1] Many of these creatures of course would be doubly odious to the Apostate in that they had waxed fat upon the plunder of temples and sacred colleges of the ancient faith. In any case, so drastic a step was on its own merits not without precedent: his predecessor, Licinius, had also in his day "vehemently cleaned his palace of its moths and mice."[2] Yet without wasting our sympathy on such worthless creatures, we may concede that Julian's purge was perhaps unduly precipitous. Mr. Baynes has not unjustly described it as "the act of a young man in a hurry."[3] Much pertinence may herein be conceded to the criticism of Socrates. "There be few which commend these his doings, and, sure I am, there be many that discommend them: because that in removing the admiration and glory of the Imperial treasure and sumptuous magnificence, whereat many did wonder, he brought the Empire into an abject port and contemptuous kind of state." "In that he banished cooks and barbers out of his court," elsewhere comments the same historian, "we have to gather that therein he played the part rather of a philosopher than of an Emperor."[4] It was not the last occasion on which the Emperor and the philosopher would collide in Julian's career.

A similar drastic comb-out was effected in the Government departments at the capital: and here Julian himself set an example by reducing the staff of his personal bureau to seventeen couriers and four clerks.

Into the details of the Emperor's administration we cannot enter here. Within his short reign of eighteen months he got through a prodigious amount of hard and useful work. As beseemed a Platonic monarch, he made it the cardinal aim of his rule to stamp out misgovernment wherever and in whatever guise he found it, and as far as

[1] *Letter to the Jews*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 178. It should be noted that Julian afterwards restored most of her father's confiscated estate to the daughter of Ursulus, a circumstance which suggests that later his eyes must have become opened to the true facts of the case.

[2] "*Ego non rationalem iussi, sed tonsorem acciri*"—Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. iv, 9.

[1] *Funeral Oration*, §§ 130-2; King, pp. 162-3.

[2] *Spadonum et aulicorum omnium vehemens domitor, tineas soricesque palatii eos appellans*—Aurelius Victor, *Epitome*, Chap. xli.

[3] *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. I, p. 79.

[4] Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. ii; Hanmer, pp. 297-8.

he could to ease the crushing burden of taxation that pressed down his subjects: "to spare the weak, to use the strong according to the measure of their power, and to punish all evaders of public burdens."[1] To his friends he would say that he desired Ancient Justice, whom the poets fabled to have fled to heaven from the vices of man, to return to earth during his reign. His enthusiastic admirer, Libanius, more than once likens the inflexible justness of Julian to that of Rhadamanthus. He passed legislation providing for the closer oversight of public officials in all grades, enforced the most rigid economy on all State expenditure, did what he could to restore the integrity of the coinage, and met special cases of acute distress by granting *ad hoc* relief. He also made regulations providing for easier and speedier appeals from lower to higher courts, and to the *Consistorium* or Imperial Privy Council, over which Julian delighted to preside in person. Men felt it unseemly that on such occasions the Emperor should make a habit of asking litigants whether they were Christians or pagans, although Ammian expressly informs us that he never allowed his judgment to be in any way influenced by the answer. It should be noted, however, that there was probably more in Julian's motive than mere unreasonable curiosity. Christians were evolving standards of conduct which in many respects differed from those of their pagan contemporaries, and it might often be a matter of real importance to determine what those standards were in deciding the right and wrong or the equity of a case. Julian insisted that *curiales* should take their share in the business and the burdens of the local corporations, refusing to allow substitutes, and directing that compulsory enrolment should be made where necessary. One of his most important and lasting reforms was the reorganisation of the public post. Scandalous abuses had grown up in connection with the right, exercised or arrogated to themselves by army commanders, provincial governors and various subordinate officials, to issue *evectiones*, or free passes, entitling their possessors to use the public conveyances. As the provision of mules and horses for these conveyances was a *munus* laid upon the wretched *curiales*, it can readily be understood how oppressive this form of official corruption would become. Ammian tells us how the bishops, travelling to and from

[1]Geffcken, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

the incessant conferences at which the doctrinal questions that rent the church were agitated, had acquired the right to use the postal service in this way: Constantine had established a disastrous precedent in this respect so early as the Council of Arles in 314. Julian now restricted the number of *evectiones* allowable to each grade of public servants, and stringently prescribed the conditions under which they might be issued. Another form of corruption in the transport organisation of the Empire against which Julian legislated was the use of public baggage animals to carry building materials for private purposes. He also provided for the upkeep of the Imperial roads, and for the improvement of the public medical services. A law of his, which reflects an interesting sidelight upon the falling birth-rate of the Empire, grants a special abatement of taxes to the fathers of thirteen children! In his appointments to provincial governorships he selected, wherever possible, candidates of Roman rather than of barbarian origin, and endeavoured also to promote men of learning and culture, as evidenced by his gift of the governorship of Lower Pannonia to the historian, Aurelius Victor; his appointment of the wise and scholarly Sallust to the Gallic Prefecture; and his appointment of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, perhaps the most high-minded pagan of his time, to the governorship of Greece. To education Julian—in this respect displaying a characteristic common to all the Emperors of the time—devoted very particular attention. He insists that character rather than ability to expound is the primary qualification for a teacher: *"magistros studiorum doctoresque excellere oportet moribus primum, deinde facundia."*[1] In his famous *Rescript on Christian Teachers*, to be discussed in its proper context later on, he has defined the purpose of education in language which even our own day, with all its restless inquiry into this subject, has failed to better. "I hold," writes Julian, "that a proper education should aim, not at a laboriously acquired facility of language, but at a healthy condition of mind—I mean a mind that has understanding and true opinions about things good and evil, honourable and base."[2] In his legislation generally, Julian displays a notable and surely a characteristic tendency to revert to the

[1]*Codex Theodosianus*, Bk. XIII, Chap. iii, No. 5.
[2]Wright, Vol. III, p. 116.

antiquum ius—that is, to old Roman principles, instead of following the trend of Christian legislation, based on Hellenistic rather than on Latin thought, that had set in since the time of Constantine.

Upon Constantinople, the place of his birth — "I love it as my mother," he writes—Julian left substantial marks of his regard. He constructed a new and magnificent harbour, naming it after himself; added a library to the Imperial palace; and established in the city a senate after the Roman pattern.[1] He also set about rebuilding Nicomedia, one of the wealthiest cities of the East, overthrown by a terrible earthquake (24th August, 358), of which Ammian and Libanius both give a vivid and heart-rending account. The defences of the Danube frontier were reorganised, and the fortifications of Thrace repaired. Measures were taken to ensure more regular payment of the troops, and in particular to improve the status and conditions of service of the *limitanei* or frontier garrisons, as compared with the "palatine" troops. At the same time Julian was particularly careful to provide adequate safeguards for the civil population against military oppression or licence. So far as possible he endeavoured also to break with the system of oriental despotism established by Diocletian and amplified by Constantine and his sons: he refused the title of *dominus*, and comported himself always rather as a *princeps* or an *imperator* of the old Roman pattern.[2]

The general impression left by a study of Julian's administrative and legislative action is that of a consistently high-minded, well thought out (if at times pedantic), and always vigorous attempt to grapple basically with the complicated social and economic evils under which the Empire was sinking. His rigorous enforcement of economy in all branches of administration, if on occasion it led him into ill-considered precipitance in action, remains one of the most honourable characteristics of his reign. Constantly the old question must have been upon his lips: to what purpose is this waste? Perhaps the best

[1] Or at all events increased the powers of a senate "of the second rank," which seems to have been instituted by Constantine. See Sievers, *Libanius*, p. 58, note 8; and *cf.* Gibbon, ed. Bury, Vol. II, p. 156, note 62, Bury's *addendum*; also O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der Antiken Welt*, Vol. IV, p. 68.

[2] The fullest account and criticism of Julian's legislation is by W. Ensslin, *Kaiser Julians Gesetzgebungswerk und Reichsverwaltung*, in *Klio*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 104-99.

summary of Julian's government is contained in the grudging tribute of his most bitter enemy, Gregory of Nazianzus, who can see only "the marks of a transient and momentary prosperity and illusion" in the pagan Emperor's "government administered with moderation, his lowering of the taxes, his judicious choice of magistrates, his punishment of peculators."[1] Of a truth the prosperity was destined to be transient and illusory, though not in the sense in which the Christian partisan meant it. But what an amazing amount of good work the youthful ruler crowded into the few brief months of his reign! "Though he hath departed young," cries Libanius in his touching monody, "yet it is after having surpassed in his performances the longest length of reigns; for whom does history record as having done so many and such great things, though he lived thrice as long?"[2] The fairest gem in Julian's diadem was the well-being of his subjects for which he strove, and his knowledge of their gratitude. Had it not been for his fatal religious policy, and all the errors into which it led him, how bright in history might that diadem have shone!

But just therein lay the rub. For, earnest as were his labours in the cause of administrative reform, they were subordinate in Julian's mind to the grand task of restoring paganism—"of bringing Piety, like a fugitive, home again"—a task which the Imperial Apostate felt to be the mission of his life. Into the dreadful labyrinth of Julian's religious system it is fortunately not necessary to enter here at length:[3] to use his own metaphor, it is a "fathomless sea."[4] The Julianic cosmogony is set forth chiefly in two long and much involved treatises which the Emperor wrote, one a hymn to his special patron, King Helios, and the other a hymn to Cybele, whom the old Romans knew as *Magna Mater*, Mother of the Gods. The former of these writings, which its first editor, Theodore Marcilius, called Julian's "pleasure garden of the Muses," and which is regarded by Franz Cumont as "the official

[1] *First Invective*, Chap. lxxv; King, p. 44.

[2] *Funeral Oration*, § 299; King, p. 215.

[3] The fullest and best documented, though probably the most unreadable, study will be found in Georg Mau, *Die Religionsphilosophie Kaiser Julians*. See also Allard, *op. cit.*, Bk. V, Chap. ii.

[4] ἀχανὲς πέλαγος, *Hymn to King Helios*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 388.

catechism of the Pagan Empire," contains the sum and substance of his religious teaching. It was written, Julian tells us incidentally, in Gaul, in three nights, and without the aid of books. Julian held by the Neoplatonic conception of a transcendental monotheism, a Supreme Principle and super-intellectual, indescribable, Ultimate Creative Source or Primal Cause—the *πρῶτον κινοῦν* of Aristotle—an Eternal Godhead, the One (*τὸ Ἕν*) or the Good (*τὸ Ἀγαθόν*), as he variously calls It, Which rules in the Intelligible World (*κόσμος νοητός*), wherein are to be found the Ideas of Plato, which Julian regards as the Intelligible or Archetypal Gods (*θεοὶ νοητοί*). Below the *κόσμος νοητός* comes an Intermediary World (*κόσμος νοερός*), the World of Intellectual Gods (*θεοὶ νοεροί*), the Gods of the Pagan Pantheon. Chief among these Julian places Mithras-Helios, the immediate source of intelligence and creation, the counterpart or emanation in this Intermediary World of the Supreme Principle in the Intelligible World.[1] In his status and functions Mithras-Helios answers to the Logos of Christian metaphysics. Below the Intellectual World, again, comes the World of Sense-Perception (*κόσμος αἰσθητός*)—the phenomenal world, that is, of matter, in which the supra-sensual Mithras-Helios has his counterpart or manifestation in the material, visible Sun: just as in Christian theology the Logos has its material and determined equivalent in Christ the God-Man. The meaning of all things is thus to be sought by carrying them back to their original and eternal Idea: "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." In this devolutionary way the entire universe was regarded as organically pervaded by the Ultimate Creative Principle: whereas to the Christian the human body was the temple of God, in the eyes of the Neoplatonist the whole universe assumed this character. 'It is the essential aim of such a philosophic articulation to provide a mystical *henosis* or union, like Homer's golden chain linking heaven and earth,[2] between the Divinity and the human soul — rising by arduous purificatory stages through the various degrees indicated, and achieving finally a reintegration with the God-head: "uniting the

[1]It is interesting to remember that Constantine before he adopted Christianity had chosen the Sun-God as his patron. Julian reversed the procedure.

[2]*Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. I, p. 573.

Divine that is within us to the Divine that is in the universe," as Plotinus had said on his deathbed. The Whither was thus finally to be resolved in the Whence. Such a union—a being "molten into one" with the Supreme Good, Plotinus calls it—could be brought about by the enthusiastic votary during his lifetime, through the intuitions of his soul, by dint of long and intense introspection, and a resultant process of inward illumination, by intensive contemplation culminating in ecstasy; in Augustinian phraseology, on entering the inmost sanctuary of the soul the Light Divine is beheld.

Such a process of ecstatic sublimation has been described to us, in language of deathless beauty, by Plotinus, the great founder of Neoplatonism. I subjoin Vacherot's free summary, as rendered by Mr. Augustine Fitzgerald:—[1]

"The soul cannot at once contemplate virtues that shine too brightly. It is only after detaching itself from the vision of corporeal beauties that it may contemplate first the sentiments and after them the virtues. But in order to discover the real beauty of these sentiments, and of their actions in the case of others, our own soul must possess them itself. Retire therefore into yourself, and if you find not beauty there as yet, do as would that artist who prunes down, polishes, purifies unceasingly until he has adorned his statue with all the gifts of beauty. Cut away from your soul all that is not upright; purify and illuminate all that which is dark and impure, cease not to embellish, to perfect your image, until the glittering light of virtue bursts upon your eyes, and you shall then contemplate wisdom lasting and unshakable, in the bosom of holy and incorruptible purity. The soul that has become intellect sees and contemplates; when it has become love it can only feel, and either love or sentiment destroys contemplation. The soul through love denudes itself of every form that pertains to the intelligible. It behaves like the initiated in the mysteries, dropping all its garments and advancing thus towards the sanctuary where God resides. In this supreme effort it imposes silence, not only upon the inferior faculties of its nature, but even upon pure thought, even upon contemplation. It no longer feels its body, it no longer feels that it is enclosed in a body. The soul loses everything, even the consciousness of its own pure essence, and thus prepared unites itself to the Good, purely by virtue of its presence. Out of this irresistible attraction is born that love which disturbs the soul and urges it to the bosom of the Good. The soul then melts away there and is absorbed so completely that it has no longer even the consciousness of the presence of God within itself. Once arrived at this height it can only now descend; thought itself is a fall when the soul has arrived at this point of love. The

[1]*Essays and Hymns of Synesius*, Vol. I, p. 46.

moment that this divine fire penetrates it, riches, fortune, science, virtue, beauty, intellect, all these leave it cold and indifferent, *and this is ecstasy.*[1]

"But why cannot the soul remain without return in this ineffable union with God, when it has once had the happiness of reaching that point? The reason is that the body solicits it without ceasing and tears it away from its divine intercourse that it may plunge it again in the life of the senses. It is not until after death that the union of the soul with God can be constant and durable."

In the following passage Julian has summed up his own doctrine with regard to the Sovereign Sun. It may serve as a specimen of his involved cosmogonic thinking.

"This then we must declare, that King Helios is One and proceeds from One God, even from the intelligible world which is itself One; and that He is midmost of the Intellectual Gods, stationed in their midst by every kind of mediateness that is harmonious and friendly, and that joins what is sundered; and that He brings together into one the last and the first, having in His own person the means of completeness, of connection, of generative life, and of uniform being: and that for the world which we can perceive He initiates blessings of all sorts, not only by means of the light with which He illumines it, adorning it and giving it its splendour, but also because He calls into existence, along with Himself, the substance of the Sun's angels; and that finally in Himself He comprehends the ungenerated cause of things generated, and—further and prior to this—the ageless and abiding cause of the life of the heavenly bodies."[2]

All this is quite in accordance with normal Neoplatonic doctrine; or at all events with that doctrine as elaborated by Jamblichus, to whom Julian always adheres in preference to Plotinus and Porphyry. Julian's special contribution seems to be threefold: the prominence he assigns to his own patron, Mithras-Helios; the stress which he lays upon the Intermediate World of the Intellectual Gods, as distinct from the Intelligible World, with its Supreme Principle, to which he rarely and vaguely alludes—holding, it would seem, with the French philosopher who said that *"le Dieu défini est le Dieu fini"*; and, above all, the special position among the Intellectual Gods given to Asclepios, a subject to which I shall refer later. Practically, Julian's religion

[1] It is on record that such a spiritual trance was undergone by Plotinus four times during his life.

[2] *Hymn to King Helios*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 386. The translation of this passage offered by King, *op. cit.*, p. 233, is much less satisfactory.

may be described as a kind of monotheistic syncretic sun-worship. Even to a superficial reader of his works it is obvious that the youthful Emperor devoted much earnest thought to the elaboration of his cosmogonic system, yet no one could call his a deep or a markedly original mind. His intellectual life, indeed, strikes us as being acute and varied rather than large, loose rather than exact in its processes, guided by emotion, even by prejudice, rather than by any more rigid discipline. His thought, like that of so many among his contemporaries, tends always to be pictorial rather than conceptual. To adapt a phrase from Meister Eckhardt, instead of penetrating to the actuality he was over prone to dally with the symbols. During the most sensitive period of his life his intellectual impressions had consisted mainly of a series of sharp revulsions, and this purely negative experience left a lasting detrimental imprint on his mind. His theology exhibits a strong oriental cast, tinged by the powerful currents of eastern thought which were permeating the Empire at this time, and of which the worship of Mithras was the outstanding manifestation. Equally with the Christians whom he contemned he illustrates the important fact that the tendency of the age was toward a mode of thought religious rather than purely philosophical.

How was this strange, eclectic metaphysical system to be brought down into everyday contact with the crude polytheism of the masses? In Julian's scheme the numberless Gods of the pagan pantheon find their due place, as we have seen, in the Intermediary or Intellectual World. Thus Julian, *amans tercentum milia divum,* accepted all the vast and variegated fabric of pagan mythology, however gross or corrupt many of its tales might be. Only he sought to give them a spiritual or mystic interpretation,[1] of which an extraordinary example is provided by his own laboured exegesis of the strange myth about the self-mutilation of Attys. "To relate fables that canonise vice is doubtless a pleasant manner of establishing virtue. It would be as efficacious as poison given to the sick, because by the aid of chemistry an excellent remedy might be extracted from it"—such is the characteristic verdict

[1] μὴ πιστεύειν ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ τὸ λεληθὸς σκοπεῖν καὶ διερευνᾶσθαι—*Julian to the Cynic Heraclius*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 118. This whole passage is most illuminating.

of La Bléterie.[1] "Fable," pungently comments Gregory of Nazianzus, "is the resource not of persons confident in their cause, but of those giving it up."[2] Well had it been for the Christian Church had she always been careful to adhere to this pregnant dictum of her most vehement apologist. It was not the Apostate, but St. Augustine, a Christian and a far greater man than Julian, who pointed out that the Plato whose writings these latter day pagans took as the starting point of their philosophy would have made a much better God than any of the fabulous heroes and deities whom they engrafted on his severely rational system.[3]

Such mystical explanations, however, Julian is always careful to insist, are for the elect alone. The masses must begin by accepting the myths literally, so that thereby they also may gradually be led on to a higher understanding. Myths, he quaintly says in one place, are like toys given to children to suck while teething.[4] In this rationalising view of mythology there was, of course, nothing new. Plato had already propounded a similar idea, and it is not unknown in early Christian thought. But Julian failed to realise the inevitable consequence of such a policy: his myths in portraying the Gods would assuredly end, like the plays of Euripides, in persuading men that the Gods did not exist. To make a stage of heaven is nothing else than godlessness, as Clement of Alexandria had pointed out to "the Greeks" of his day, more than a century earlier than Julian.

If we consider Julian's system not merely as the mystical speculations of a not over clear-headed dreamer, but as what he meant it to be, and strove with all his might and main to make it, namely, the universally applicable creed of a new state paganism, the dominant impression that it leaves on our mind is a sense of its unpractical futility. How possibly could such a weird compound of high mystery and base superstition, imperfectly fused in the crucible of sensationalism—how

[1] *La plaisante manière d'établir la vertu, que de débiter des fables qui canonisent le vice! Il vaudroit autant donner du poison à un malade, parce qu'à l'aide de la Chimie on en peut tirer un bon remède—op. cit.*, p. 26, footnote: English translation, p. 27.

[2] *First Invective*, Chap. cxvii; King, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[3] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Bk. II, Chap. xiv.

[4] *Oration to the Cynic Heraclius*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 78; see also *Hymn to the Mother of the Gods, ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 475.

could a crude amalgam like this take the place of the simple and beautiful Christian doctrine of Redemption, so full of unspeakable comfort in a perplexed, unhappy age? That doctrine, as Kingsley has well pointed out, provided "for the first time in the world's life, a good news not merely for the select few, but for all mankind without respect of rank or race."[1] "The poor have the Gospel preached to them," Christ Himself had said. On the other hand the cardinal flaw in the Neoplatonic philosophy consisted in the fact that it could offer no explanation of, and provided no solution for, the terrific problem of the fact of evil: *si quidem Deus est, unde mala?* To the Neoplatonist the problem of evil was purely a metaphysical one: it resided, he would airily say, in the struggle between the soul's memory of the Divine from which it is derived, and its love for the body wherein it is temporarily enmeshed—an explanation which could scarcely satisfy or strengthen ordinary men and women cruelly at grips with the grim and gigantic realities of human wickedness and an unkind time. Christianity on the other hand found an explanation of evil in the dualism between God and Satan, and provided a solution, at once easily apprehended and of ineffable comfort, in the redeeming mission of Christ Jesus:—

"For lo! between our sins and their reward
We set the Passion of Thy SON our LORD."

And how could Julian's Supreme Principle — "a majestic bundle of abstract nouns loosely tied up in impersonality"[2]—how could this stand for one moment beside the historical verity of this Christ Jesus, the Son of Man, the Saviour? "What you seek in conjecture, we know!" triumphantly replied St. Ambrose to the arguments of the pagan Symmachus: "how can we believe you when you admit that you don't know what you are worshipping?" "Where is He to be found whom we have been seeking for so many ages?" cried Seneca in desperation, thereby putting his finger upon the cardinal insufficiency not only of his own Stoicism but of all the later Graeco-Roman pagan philosophies. St. Augustine exposed the kernel of the matter when, after pointing out much that is recognisably Neoplatonic in the Gospel according to St. John—"In the beginning was the Word,

[1] *Hypatia*, Preface.

[2] I borrow the phrase from T. R. Glover, *The Jesus of History*, p. 165.

and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"—he continued emphatically: "but that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, that have I not read in the Platonists."[1] Therein precisely lay the vital weakness of Neoplatonism: in this lack of a self-revealed God, brought directly into healing contact with sinful and suffering humanity, and promising it a redemption not only universal but personal, lay the reason why so many otherwise elevated minds and sensitive natures—Julian's among them—sought by the crudest thaumaturgic means to strengthen the tenuity of the links which their philosophy offered between mortal man and eternal God. Man's love of God might be the motive of the Neoplatonist's effort to unite himself with a remote and passive Supreme Being through a series of ecstatic sublimations: but God's love and compassion for man lie at the root of the Christian doctrines of the Incarnation and the Redemption. In the one thesis a total loss of human personality was involved; in the other, the perpetuation of that personality was a prime concern of the Deity. There is nothing in Neoplatonism which corresponds to that personal interest of God in the individual human being upon which such emphasis is laid in the teaching of Jesus. "A thing of price is man," wrote Synesius, "because for man Christ died."

Julian felt the difficulty; and the way in which he planned to meet it forms one of the most extraordinary features about his religious system—a feature upon which, in my opinion, too little attention has usually been focussed. He proposed nothing less than an experiment in pagan soteriology: in place of Christ the Redeemer he would set Asclepios the Healer. There are passages in Julian's writings that most clearly indicate this thought—a thought to which, had the young Emperor been spared to work out his philosophy completely, he would doubtless have given greater prominence. The cult of Aesculapius as a healer of diseases both physical and mental was widely spread in the Græco-Roman world,[2] but Julian seems to carry its soteriological implications far further than any previous thinker. For example, take these words from the hymn to King Helios. "Since he fills the whole of our life with fair order, he begat Asclepios in the world, though even

[1] *Confessions*, Bk. VII, Chap. ix.

[2] See the last chapter of S. Angus, *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World.*

before the beginning of the world he had him by his side."[1] Substitute Christ for Asclepios, and we have almost a clause from the Nicene creed.[2] So also in the same hymn: "shall I now go on to tell you how Helios took thought for the health and safety of all men by begetting Asclepios to be the saviour of the whole world?"[3] And again, in his great polemic against the Christians: "Zeus engendered Asclepios from himself among the Intelligible Gods, and through the life of generative Helios he revealed him to the earth. . . . He visits no one of us separately, and yet he raises up souls that are sinful and bodies that are sick."[4] At other times in Julian's ill-defined system it is Heracles rather than Asclepios who seems to appear in the *rôle* of a Divine Saviour of mankind. "For Heracles," he says in his *Oration against the Cynics,* "for Heracles mighty Zeus, with the aid of Athene Goddess of Forethought, begat to be the saviour of the world . . . and later on he called him to his side through the flame of a thunderbolt, thus bidding his son come to him by the divine signal of the ethereal ray."[5] The purely Christian thought underlying such passages culled from the pagan Emperor's writings is evident. In much of its inward being the soul of the Apostate remained a Christian one, and perhaps without realising it he sought to Christianise paganism, to quicken it into new life by the spirit of the faith he had forsworn. "Spoil the Egyptians," Augustine at the end of the century was to cry, wisely urging his co-religionists to absorb all that was best in pagan thought: but his advice had already been anticipated, in the reverse sense, by the greatest pagan of the time.

Having thus bestowed a hasty glance on Julian's theological system, let us now consider how he sought to give it effect. His policy naturally falls under two heads: his attempted restoration of pagan worship, and his action against the Christians. At once after his accession (Edict of 4th February, 362) all the temples that had been closed were opened throughout the Empire, and public sacrifices were

[1] Wright, Vol. I, p. 392.

[2] But *cf.* Geffcken, *ad loc.*, *op. cit.*, p. 160, note to p. 99, line 25.

[3] Wright, Vol. I, p. 418.

[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 374.

[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 110.

resumed.[1] Lands and revenues belonging to the ancient faith which had been confiscated or stolen for Christian use were ordered to be restored. Unfair immunities from public burdens which the clergy had come to enjoy were revoked. But Julian's plans went far beyond mere restitution. The new paganism of his dreams was not to be the happy-go-lucky, unorganised, *laisser-faire* polytheism of the olden days. The challenge of triumphant Christianity must be met by a counter-reformation of the ancient faith. Keenly appreciative of the compact organisation and strenuous discipline of the Church, Julian planned to copy it in the institutions of his renovated paganism. There was to be a hierarchy, wherein the rural priests were under the control of provincial metropolitans, who in turn took their orders from the Emperor as *Pontifex Maximus*. There were to be pagan monasteries, nunneries, hospitals, welfare agencies for those in prison—all after the Christian model. In his remarkable *Letter to a Priest,* the Imperial pontiff lays down the rule of life which he required from the servants of this new paganism: and once again shows how deeply he had drunk from the well of Christian precept, and how closely he had studied Christian practice.[2] The priest, he says, must be an example to all men: he must love God and his neighbour, must be diligent in his attendance on the temple services, must be careful what he reads and whom he admits to his friendship, and must shun the theatres and the taverns.[3] Within the sanctuary it is meet that he should wear gorgeous vestments in honour of the God he serves, but outside he must dress quietly. In addition to conducting the temple services, he must be indefatigable in the discharge of pastoral duties. He must preach frequently, he must organise poor relief within his parish, he must tend the sick. How thoroughly Christian is all this! In all essentials Julian's pagan anticipation of the *regulae pastoralis liber* might be adopted as a standard of clerical conduct to-day. But again, how utterly different is

[1]The accentuated trend of anti-pagan legislation since the death of Constantine is summarised by Allard, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 54-8.

[2]For a somewhat different view on this matter see Geffcken, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-4. But the contemporary opinion of Gregory, *First Invective*, Chap. cxi, seems decisive on the point; *cf.* Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. V, Chap. xvi.

[3]So the Council of Arles in 314 had forbidden the Christian clergy to frequent the stage and the amphitheatre.

this new, centralised, articulated, strenuous, evangelistic, and morally earnest paganism from the careless, inchoate, and wordly faith of byegone Hellas! The Gods of Julian's pantheon, mystic emanations of a Supreme Being, were something radically alien from those brightly anthropomorphic deities of old Olympus. Julian desired no blind and jejune reversion to a creed outworn. If he cleaved so staunchly to the past, it was not because he had no hope for the future. On the contrary, he dreamed of the palingenesis of a philosophical paganism, adapted to the needs of the age as he understood them, and compactly organised to meet Christianity upon its own ground. The great Apostate was not a reactionary, he was a revivalist, and a revivalist whose enthusiasm was guided by a statesman's love of discipline and method.

A point here worthy of note is that in many particulars of his policy, both as against the Christians and also in regard to his attempted revival and organisation of paganism, Julian had been anticipated by that most certainly very able, if somewhat enigmatic Emperor, Maximin Daia. In his extant writings Julian (so far as I know) never mentions Maximin, but it would appear that the Apostate, whose mind was not of an original cast, had closely studied his predecessor's reign. Maximin, or Theotecnus and the others who advised him, had planned, like Julian, to organise a pagan priesthood after the Christian pattern, and had also, for the first time it would seem, enlisted the arts of the propagandist in support of his campaign.

It is in his action against the Christians—or Galileans, as he chose to call them, emphasising what in his proud Roman eyes was their mean provincial origin—that Julian has attracted the greatest attention and incurred the fiercest criticism. The disciple of Plato could never be a persecutor, and to his humane temper cruelty was utterly repugnant. Much as he detested the Christians, he could never breathe out threatenings and slaughter against them. Moreover, for all his fanaticism he was endowed with far too large a fund of saving common sense, and had much too keen an appreciation of the lessons of history, to deceive himself that he could hope to gain his ends by a policy of blind repression. For as Julian's warm admirer, the pagan Libanius, *"parlant en Payen, mais en homme sensé,"* most truly says, "it is not

with false ideas of religion as with diseases. The sick are sometimes cured by using a salutary violence. But neither fire nor steel will ever make that appear true which is judged to be false. If the hand sacrifices, the heart disavows the act. The soul deplores the weakness of its body, and remains attached to the first object of its worship. 'Tis dissimulation, not a change. What follows from this? Those who have complied go and implore forgiveness of the party they have but in appearance abandoned. They are pardoned an involuntary fault; and the others, who have resisted to torments, are honoured as deities."[1] Amid the gathering intolerance of the Dark Ages this was from the pagan side a noble thought which was to find perhaps its last Christian expression, a century and a half later, in a pithy remark of the wise and eloquent Cassiodorus: *"religionem imperare non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut credat invitus."*[2]

The first act of Julian's reign accordingly, so far from revoking the Edict of Milan, was to promulgate a new decree of universal tolerance, which came with all the more pungent force from the pagan Emperor, because within the Church herself those "bigots of the iron time," the Arian party dominant under Constantius, had been (as we saw) most vindictively persecuting the adherents of orthodoxy. Julian's attitude was nothing else than a reversion to the long forgotten policy of according to all that *libera atque absoluta colendae religionis suae facultas* which Constantine and Licinius had granted to each and all of their subjects half a century before. In effect therefore Julian's decree was an Act Rescissory of all subsequent legislation. "I affirm by the Gods," he wrote emphatically, "that I do not wish the Galileans to be put to death, or unjustly beaten, or to suffer any other injury."[3] "I forbid you to take away any life on account of religion," he said on another occasion to an over zealous official. Christian heretical sects, such as the Donatists and the Novatians, received the Imperial protection against their Orthodox persecutors. His edict of toleration had consequences in Julian's favour which he knew the

[1] Libanius, *Funeral Oration on Julian*, § 122. The translation is from the English version of La Bléterie's *Life*, pp. 137-8.

[2] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, XXVII (*Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Vol. XII, p. 62).

[3] *Letter to Atarbius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 122.

Christians well enough to foresee. As the Arians now no longer had the power by casting out their adversaries to make a wilderness and call it peace, the orthodox clergy everywhere trooped back jubilantly from exile; and the most bitter sectarian strife and sordid quarrellings for place at once broke out in the Church. Julian thus enjoyed the satisfaction of providing the world with the novel spectacle of Christians rending each other to pieces under the tolerant patronage of a pagan Emperor. It was the old Roman policy, *divide et impera*. Nay more, the Apostate in person with malice aforethought afforded himself the sardonic pleasure of presiding over a conference of bishops in his own palace, and preaching them an unheeded sermon on Christian charity. Even in the Imperial presence the disputants nearly tore each other's eyes out, and above the hubbub the Emperor's voice was scarcely heard to shout: "Hear me, brethren: the Franks and the Allemans have listened to my voice!" One thinks of the grand injunction of Cromwell on a somewhat similar occasion: "I beseech you, gentlemen, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken!"

Yet although Julian can never be regarded as a persecutor, although the fiercer Christians bitterly complained that his astute moderation denied them the coveted glory of the martyr's crown, he cannot be acquitted of the charge of systematically pushing a preference for pagans even to the point of downright unfairness. Just as a hook is concealed in the bait, observes Gregory, so the Emperor hid his arbitrary dealings under a covering of cajolery. It was soon fairly general knowledge that the only avenue to Imperial favour was by way of apostasy. When we find the Emperor writing to the people of Pessinus that they may expect his bounty only if they worship *Magna Mater*, otherwise let them beware his enmity; when we find him rejecting an invitation to visit Nisibis unless the inhabitants revert to paganism; when we find him ordering the town of Bostra to expel its bishop, we realise how far Julian, under the gathering stress of the titanic conflict which he had joined with Christianity, could forgo his own cherished ideal of philosophic toleration. Libanius in his panegyric upon the Emperor candidly admits how he discriminated unfairly between pagan and Christian cities. "Such as kept their temples yet standing he was delighted with, and declared them worthy of receiving

the greatest favours; but those that had pulled down either all, or the greater part of them, he regarded as polluted, and although he gave them a share of his bounty, because they were his subjects, *it was not without grudging*."[1] "It is not lawful for me," Julian himself contended, adapting a Homeric couplet to suit his point, "it is not lawful for me to cherish or to pity men who are the enemies of the immortal Gods."[2] Here indeed was a notable reservation upon the command, given to him in his own fable by Helios and Athene, to love all his subjects! He would not consent to be loved, he tells us significantly in one of his letters, except by those who loved the Gods.[3]

Nor did the matter rest here. The more turbulent pagans speedily found that they might retaliate their wrongs upon their adversaries without fear of chastisement. Thus when the populace of Alexandria, the most lawless, fanatical, and ill-conditioned city in the Empire, on Christmas Eve, 361, mobbed and slew their Arian bishop, George[4]—who to be sure was an odious scamp, by his flock "hated as a toad"—Julian contented himself with scolding them roundly, and directed with unseemly insistence that the murdered bishop's library should be secured for his own use. The incident fails to impress us with a sense of Julian's right dealing; although on the other hand we must recognise nothing but a malign perversion in the charge which Gregory levels against the Emperor, namely that he reserved to himself the credit which accrues from the use of merely persuasive methods, while counting on the violence of the city mobs to make full play with the alternative policy of coercion. But such an act as the giving of public office to the worthless turncoat, Helpidius, forms an ugly blotch on Julian's escutcheon; and again, the punishment which the Emperor inflicted upon the Arian community at Edessa, by depriving their church of its revenues because they had committed outrages upon the Valentinians, may have been an act of ordinary justice, but Julian's reputation for impartiality is not enhanced by the mean and bitter jibe

[1] Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, § 129; King, p. 161.

[2] *Letter to Arsacius, High Priest of Galatia*, in Wright, Vol. III, p. 72: *cf. Odyssey*, Bk. X, v. 73.

[3] *Letter to the Priestess Theodora*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 112.

[4] The same who had lent Julian books during his internment at Macellum.

with which he pronounced his sentence. "Their admirable law," he said, "promises to the poor the kingdom of heaven: 'tis but just to help them forward on their way to it. Poverty will render them wise in this world, and make them reign in the other."[1] In such a declaration it becomes very plain that the Imperial philosopher, who had proudly declared that he wished Justice to resume her reign on earth, had succeeded only in enthroning Prejudice in her place.

From the legionary standards the Christian emblems—in particular the "Great Symbol," the Chi-Rho monogram—were stripped, and the soldiers before receiving pay were required to cast incense upon the *thuribulum*. Libanius tells us without disapproval that bribery was employed to persuade recalcitrants. "When words did not suffice, gold also and silver co-operated for persuasion, and through a trifling gain the soldier got a greater gain, that is, through a piece of gold the favour of the Gods, the lords of battles."[2] It is very curious to compare the exactly opposite view of this matter taken by Gregory. Each soldier, he writes indignantly, "was obliged to throw incense upon the fire, and so to receive gold from the Emperor, pay for perdition, small price for so dear a thing—for entire souls of men, and for sin against God! They that had subdued the whole world were overthrown by a tiny fire, a gold coin, and a little smoke—the greater part of them not being even aware of this sacrifice of themselves." Each soldier who kissed the Emperor's hand, asserts the irate Gregory, was really kissing his own murderer![3]

All this sort of thing made for growing bitterness, and indications are not lacking that, in the face of obstinate and at times lawless opposition, the young Emperor might not long have succeeded in maintaining the fairly creditable measure of impartiality that distinguishes his short reign. The historian Socrates has put on record particulars, perhaps exaggerated, of the way in which provincial governors sometimes exceeded their instructions in molesting the Christians, and of the harsh unmanly scorn with which Julian rebuffed complaints from the

[1] *Letter to Hecebolius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 126. The translation is from the English La Bléterie, p. 177.

[2] *Funeral Oration*, § 168: King, p. 174.

[3] *First Invective*, Chap. lxxxiii; King, pp. 50-1.

sufferers. "The governors of the provinces," Socrates tells us, "supposing now that it was high tide for them under colour of the Emperor's religion to make up their bags, vexed the Christians far sorer than the Emperor's proclamations bare them out; demanded greater taxes than they were seized at, and sometimes tormented their bodies. The Emperor understanding of their doings, winked at them, and answered the Christians which complained to him in this sort: 'It is your part when you have injuries offered unto you to take it patiently, for so your God commanded you!' "[1] On the whole Socrates in his oft-quoted general verdict seems to have not unfairly summed up the case: "although he let pass the unsatiable tyranny practised in the time of Diocletian, yet ceased he not altogether from persecuting. In mine opinion he is a persecutor which molesteth any kind of way such men as lead a quiet and peaceable life. Julian in this sort afflicted the Christians not a little."[2]

At the same time one is bound to admit that provocative action was by no means absent from the other side. This is well brought out by a story which Socrates himself proceeds to narrate, and with undisguised approval. "There was at Merus, a city of Phrygia, a certain governor, whose name was Amachius, who commanded that the idolatrical temple of the ethnics, which stood in the city, should be set wide open, that the foul heaps and filthy corners, of a long while unfrequented, should be made clean, and fell himself a-worshipping of the idols.[3] Which act of his pricked not a little in conscience the zealous Christians. Wherefore one Macedonius, Theodulus, and Tatianus, being kindled with fervency of love towards the Christian faith, could in no wise away with such horrible practices: but in the burning zeal of their godly minds brake in the night season into the temple, threw down their idols, and stamped them into powder. Whereat when the governor was wonderful wroth, and purposed to execute divers of the citizens which were guiltless and innocent persons, the authors thereof presented themselves of their own accord before him, and chose to die themselves for the truth, rather than that any other for their sakes should be deprived of their lives. After they were laid in hold, the governor commanded that they should clear themselves by sacrificing unto the idols, and threatened them, if they refused, he would severely punish them. They, being of a noble mind and valiant courage, set naught by his threats, made themselves ready to suffer what torment so ever were laid upon them, for they counted it far better to lose their lives than to defile their souls with those impure sacrifices. The governor when he had assayed them with all kinds of torments, last of all set them on the gridiron, caused fire to be made under, and broiled them to death. And to the end that they might valiantly encounter under the glorious garland of victory, they reason thus with the governor: 'if thou long, O Amachius, after broiled meat, turn up the other side of us, lest in the eating we seem raw unto thee, and the blood run about thy teeth!' This was the end that these men had."[1] We would fain hope that the colours of this ghastly word-picture have been heightened by the narrator, but in any event our judgment upon the whole episode is surely clear. However much modern humanity will revolt from the barbarous torture said to have been inflicted upon these misguided and fanatical agitators, it is none the less obvious that the so-called "martyrs," by their unprovoked and reckless sabotage, had fairly brought such condign punishment upon themselves.

Of a like texture is the repellent story of the treatment meted out to Mark, the aged Bishop of Arethusa. An eloquent preacher and a man of saintly life, he was also, unfortunately, a violent bigot, who in the reign of Constantius had wantonly demolished a greatly venerated heathen temple—an abode of devils, so Gregory politely calls it. When Julian promulgated his decree of restitution Bishop Mark was very naturally and rightly ordered to rebuild the temple at his own cost. Being unable or unwilling to find the money, he fled into concealment: but on learning that his default was having unpleasant consequences for his flock, the old man gallantly came back and

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. III, Chap. xiv: Hanmer, p. 307.

[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. xii; Hanmer, p. 305. It is impossible now to form any sound ideas as to the exact extent to which during the reign of Julian the Christians had to suffer outrages at the hands of pagan mobs or over-zealous officials.

[3] The Greek text here is: καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀγάλματα ἐκκαθαίρειν ἠξίου, "ordered the statues in the temple to be cleaned."

[1] Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. xv; Hanmer, p. 307. Those acquainted with the Greek text will be aware that the Elizabethan translator has improved somewhat on the vigour of language used by the three sufferers.

surrendered himself to justice. It appears that the magistrates were greatly loth to push matters to an extremity, for in the face of the bishop's steadfast refusal to pay up they gradually whittled down their bill until, as Gregory himself admits, it became clear that they were merely resolved to establish the principle of restitution by forcing him to pay a purely nominal sum. Mark, however, obstinately declined to fork out a single penny: nor did his flock, for whom he had risked the utmost, show their gratitude in the obvious way, namely, by collecting the money amongst themselves and so releasing their pastor from danger. The upshot of this *impasse* was a disastrous explosion of the worst elements among the pagan mob. The old man was seized, stripped naked, and after cruel torments was smeared with honey and suspended in a net under the blazing eastern sun, and exposed to the assaults of noisome insects. From this tragic plight he was at length saved by the compassionate intervention of the Prefect of the East. Amid all the horror and pain with which we read a tale so disgraceful to human nature, we must not forget his fanatical obstinacy in our admiration for the old man's fortitude. In his own characteristic way Julian has himself passed a verdict on such lamentable incidents. "The tribe of evil demons," he writes, "is appointed to punish those who do not worship the Gods; and stung to madness by them many atheists are induced to court death in the belief that they will fly up to heaven when they have brought their lives to a violent end."[1] At the same time he admits, with his usual fairness, that some of his own adherents were not blameless. "So excited were they in mind and so exalted in spirit," he says, "that they even attacked those who were offending against the Gods with more violence than I could have wished."[2]

In one notable case Julian in person abandoned altogether his Platonic restraint, and became frankly a persecutor—if not quite *igne et ense*. The great Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, "the light and mirror of all Egypt," the foremost living champion of Nicene orthodoxy, the most powerful personality as well as the profoundest

[1] *Letter to a Priest*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 296.
[2] *Misopogon, ibid.*, p. 484.

intellect of his age, had been driven from his see under the Arian Constantius. When Julian published his edict of toleration, and after Bishop George's murder, Athanasius resumed his episcopal throne. Julian was extremely wroth, and wrote the Alexandrians saying that his edict merely recalled the exiled clergy, and did not authorise them to take up again their pastoral duties. In peremptory language he directed that the bishop should be hunted from the town. "By all the Gods," he wrote in high displeasure, snatching the pen from his secretary and adding to the Imperial rescript a few hasty words in his own hand—"there is nothing I should be so glad to hear as that Athanasius has been expelled from Egypt. The scoundrel! He has had the impudence to baptise Greek ladies of rank during my reign. Let him be cast forth!" In this painful exhibition of intolerance—accompanied as it was by a cheaply abusive sneer at the bishop's diminutive person—we see Julian at his worst; we recognise also his unwitting tribute to a greater man. Bowing to the Imperial wrath, Athanasius retired (24th October, 362), with the famous and prophetic remark—"it is but a little cloud, and will soon blow over."[2]

The most deadly of all the blows that Julian aimed at Christianity was his celebrated Edict of 17th June, 363, closing the teaching profession to adherents of the new faith. It must be remembered that in those days higher education was exclusively Hellenistic. Christians and pagans alike were brought up on the pure literature of ancient Greece. This to Julian was intolerable. In his eyes Homer would be the bible of the new paganism, a book divinely inspired: how then could it be expounded by those who had renounced Homer's Gods? "Was it not the Gods," he wrote, "who gave their wisdom to Homer, Hesiod, Demosthenes, Herodotus, Thucydides, Isocrates and Lysias? Did not these authors believe themselves consecrated to their various patron Muses. I think it absurd that men who expound the works of these writers should dishonour the Gods whom they revered. If they wish to teach, they must persuade their pupils that neither Homer nor Hesiod nor any of those writers whom they expound was really guilty of impiety and folly in their belief in the Gods. Otherwise let them

[1] *Letter to the Alexandrians*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 142.
[2] Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. xiv.

expound Matthew and Luke in the churches of the Galileans!"[1] "If your own Scriptures are sufficient for you," he said to the Christians, "why then do you nibble at the learning of the Hellenes?"[2]

It is, of course, easy to follow, and even in some degree to sympathise with, Julian's line of thought. Holding as he did that the ancient culture was synonymous with the ancient religion—that literature and the worship of the Gods are twin sisters—[3] it seemed to him highly improper, and indeed immoral, that Christian teachers in the public schools and universities should earn their daily bread by expounding the works of the great pagan writers whose faith they derided. We should not to-day relish the spectacle of a Moslem or a Buddhist teaching the New Testament in a Sunday school. "The same mouth cannot contain both the praises of Jove and the praises of Christ," St. Gregory the Great from his own point of view was to remark two centuries later. The thing to Julian's mind was dishonest, and must be stopped. Moreover, Julian probably felt that there was something meretricious about the way in which the Christians studied the great masterpieces of ancient literature purely for the sake of their form, while belittling and jeering at their content. At the same time, on a wider view I think there can be little doubt that his edict was mistaken. The Christian Gregory of Nazianzus rightly stigmatises it as an importation of tyranny into the realm of literature. Even among the pagans it was received with condemnation. The moderate-minded Ammian, himself no friend to the Christians, describes it in emphatic terms as "a harsh edict, deserving to be overwhelmed in perpetual oblivion."[4] Hitherto in the realm of scholarship alone there had been a concordat between the two faiths. Future champions of the Church like Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea had sat on the same bench with the budding Apostate at the University of Athens. Libanius himself, though in his speeches he never lets pass an

[1] *Rescript on Christian Teachers*, Wright, Vol. III, pp. 118-20; to be taken in connection with the Edict of 17th June, 362, in *Codex Theodosianus*, Bk. XIII, Chap. iii, No. 5.

[2] *Against the Galileans*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 384.

[3] Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, § 157.

[4] "*Illud autem inclemens, obruendum perenni silentio, quod arcebat docere magistros et grammaticos, ritus Christiani cultores*"—Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. x, 6: *cf.* Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 20.

opportunity to sneer at Christianity and to castigate its adherents, yet stood in friendly personal relations with many of the leading Churchmen of his time, and numbered among his students such great apologists of the Christian faith as Basil and Chrysostom. Both in the east and in the west at this period the leaders of the new faith yielded to no pagan in their admiration of the masterpieces of ancient literature. Augustine was moved to tears by the fate of Dido: *Profani si quid bene dixerunt, non aspernandum,* was his advice to Christian scholars. *Ciceronianus es, non Christianus,* said the voice to Jerome in his fevered trance. In the fourth century, despite Tertullian, Jerusalem still had something to do with Athens. "That which is good, wherever it is found, appertaineth unto the truth," observes the historian Socrates. "The beautiful, wherever it is, is ours, because it is a gift of God," opines Clement of Alexandria in a similar vein. The time had not yet come when authoritative Christian thought, under the powerful leadership of St. Gregory the Great, and influenced doubtless by a belief in the imminence of the Last Judgment which was probably helped by the fearful catastrophe of the Empire and all it stood for, would turn its back definitely on the older humanism. But even in the fourth century the growing antagonism between the new faith and the spirit of the ancient literatures was becoming apparent to observing minds. And Julian, to whom the Christianity of his own day thus appeared not unrightly as a force fundamentally antagonistic to the ancient culture, could not, of course, foresee how completely the two streams of Christianity and Hellenism, which to him seemed irreconcilable, have blended in our own time. He saw the Dark Ages looming ahead: he could not discern the Renaissance beyond.[1] But he might at least have taken the subtler view that the more widely the glorious old Hellenic literature was known, the greater would be the temptation for men of taste to adopt the faith of old Hellas—as he himself indeed had done. In any case, his importation of religious bigotry into the realm of learning was altogether a retrograde step. As Bishop Lyttleton justly remarks, "to Julian belongs the doubtful credit of having invented the 'religious difficulty' in education."[2]

[1] Alice Gardner, *Julian, Philosopher and Emperor*, p. 174.

[2] *Modern Poets of Faith, Doubt and Paganism*, p. 289.

All this, of course, sounds unpleasant enough in a modern ear. But in order to arrive at a fair judgment on such questions, we must endeavour to think ourselves back so as to recapture something of that far-off disputatious atmosphere of the fourth century. It is easy, if we will, to dismiss it in a phrase as an age of violent bigotry. A deeper insight suggests important qualifying considerations. The first two centuries of the Roman Empire were a period of perhaps unparalleled materialism. The world was disillusioned and weary—sick of the prolonged strife that had accompanied the break up of the old social order, and the collapse of the republican constitution; only too willing, therefore, to bow the neck to a soul-destroying despotic power which at all events promised peace and material well-being. All faith in a benign Providence had long since vanished: no one any more believed in the old creeds, nor was a new one yet to hand. Such a state of affairs could not possibly endure. Man does not live by bread alone: sooner or later a spiritual awakening was inevitable. Humanly speaking, the rapid spread of Christianity was an effect even more than the cause of such an awakening. Parallel with it went on an equally intensive spiritual revival in the many noble minds that still clung staunchly to the ancient Gods. Julian himself is a case in point. Instead of scoffing at the old Olympian deities, he seeks to rationalise them, and to extract a moral from their myths. Bigoted as the fourth century may seem, its bigotry is immeasurably to be preferred to the sad and aimless materialism which it succeeded. After all, if the populations of the east lashed themselves into recurrent frenzies over the great Christological disputes, better this by far than that their mental energies should have been utterly absorbed by bread-and-butter politics and by the things of the present world. In this respect neither Julian nor his antagonists, fanatical though they both were, need suffer unduly by comparison with the "enlightened" scoffers of two centuries before. And we must further remember that all men are determined by their time. In the Roman world of the fourth century two considerations operated powerfully in the minds of thinking citizens. The one consideration was a profound conviction of the utter rottenness of society. The other consideration was a helpless sense of inability to regenerate that society under an autocratic polity which consistently

discountenanced the aid of enlightened public opinion. All that remained to intelligent men under such conditions was the desire at all events to save their own souls, if the Empire and society could not be saved. And to save oneself and one's fellows, in a perplexed age when all things are in the melting pot, what more simple than to demand rigid obedience to a formulated creed, and what more comforting than such a creed when once it is accepted? The revival of Roman Catholicism in our own distressful age perhaps suggests an interesting parallel to what has been thus said in regard to the fourth century.

It is an entire misapprehension to imagine that the great Apostate's bitter hatred of Christianity was inspired merely by his sentimental love of Hellenism, or even by his strong reaction from the faults of the Church as he knew her. Only a totally inadequate appreciation of the facts can sum up Julian as "the man whom the faults of the Church of his day turned into Julian the Apostate."[1] Equally I would hold that all the evidence at our disposal forbids us to accept the characteristically eighteenth-century view that Julian was a pagan *"plus encore par pédanterie que par libertinage."*[2] His opposition to the Christian faith was no mere piece of fossil antiquarianism, on the contrary it was seated in the inmost tissues of his being. Can anything, for example, exceed the intense loathing and the utter scorn of such a passage as this, taken from his great polemic against the Christians? "Would not any man be justified in detesting the more intelligent among you, or pitying the more foolish, who by following you have sunk to such depths of ruin that they have abandoned the ever living Gods in favour of a dead Jew? . . . Had you indeed espoused the Hebrew teachings, you would not have fared altogether ill, and though worse than before, when you were on the side of us [the Hellenes], still your condition would have been bearable. For you would be worshipping one God instead of many—not a man, or rather many wretched men.[3] And though you would be following a law which is harsh and stern and contains much that is savage and barbarous, instead of our mild and

[1] Lyttleton, *op. cit.*, p. 281; *cf.* Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 134: *"Julians Apostasie scheint im letzten Grunde die Schuld der damaligen Christen."*

[2] La Bléterie, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[3] A gibe at the Christian cult of martyrs, which Julian especially detested.

humane laws, and would in other respects be inferior to us, yet you would be more holy and purer in your forms of worship. But now it has come to pass that like leeches you have sucked the worse blood from that source and left the purer. Yet Jesus has been known by name for scarcely more than three hundred years; and during his lifetime he accomplished little worth hearing of, unless any one thinks that to heal crooked and blind men and to exorcise those who were possessed by devils in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany can be classed as a mighty achievement! As for purity of life, you do not know whether he so much as mentioned it; but you emulate the rage and the bitterness of the Jews, overturning temples and altars, and you have slaughtered not only those of us who remained true to the teachings of our fathers, but also men who are as much astray as yourselves, heretics as you call them because they do not wail over the dead in the same fashion as you do. But these indeed are your own doings; for nowhere did either Jesus or Paul hand down to you such commandments. The reason for this is that they never hoped that you would one day attain to such power: for they were content if they could delude maidservants and slaves!"[1]

As a Neoplatonist, to the Pauline idea of a Godhead veiled in flesh, of a God-man, a deity made incarnate for a mission of redemption, Julian opposed the philosophical conception of the Man-God, of man himself becoming God, rising in gradual stages, by his own effort towards righteousness, into a final *henosis* or identification with the Supreme Good, the transcendental First Cause or Universal Principle. Intellectually the emphasis laid by Christianity upon faith seemed to him altogether contemptible in contrast to the Neoplatonic endeavour to secure integration with God by reason—the way of *gnosis* as opposed to the way of *pistis*. Christian theology, he would say with bitter scorn, is summed up in the one word, "believe."[2] To his mystical soul the

[1] *Against the Galileans*, Wright, Vol. III, pp. 372-6.

[2] So Gibbon (ed. Bury, Vol. IV, p. 265): "a new religion, whose ministers superseded the exercise of reason, resolved every question by an article of faith, and condemned the infidel or sceptic to eternal flames." The words might be Julian's. The same gibe had been made by Celsus two centuries before. Yet to the masses of struggling and perplexed humanity Julian's own system could offer nothing more than this same word "believe": φιλεῖ γὰρ ἡ φύσις κρύπτεσθαι, καὶ τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον τῆς τῶν θεῶν οὐσίας

idea of redemption as the Christians stated it seemed a crude and repellent contact of the finite with the infinite: "the mistaken folly," he calls it, "of base and ignorant creed-making fishermen."[1] Equally crude and absurd in his eyes was the current Christian eschatology which imposed on an omnipotent Deity the ludicrous necessity of finding a catastrophic solution to the problems of a universe which He himself had created. "The Gods, not being ignorant of what they intend to do, do not have to correct their own errors," he writes.[2] As a man of taste, Julian was revolted by the Christian worship of the dead, by the grovelling before rotten bones and dubious relics which was a new and disagreeable feature of Church worship.[3] His sense of decency was offended by the veneration paid to martyrs who to him were often merely sedition-mongers justly executed, or at best persons of complete unimportance. In his eyes after all Christ Himself was no more than an obscure Jew whom his own folk slew and hanged on a tree: "one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." The Roman Porcius Festus in his day had thought that much learning had made St. Paul mad; and now the Roman in Julian thought precisely the same thing. For the Emperor's Roman pride was wounded by the

οὐκ ἀνέχεται γυμνοῖς εἰς ἀκαθάρτους ἀκοὰς πίπτεσθαι ῥήμασι—*Oration to the Cynic Heraclius*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 102. ὑφ' ἡμῶν πιστευέσθω μᾶλλον ἢ δεικνύσθω, he says elsewhere (*Hymn to King Helios*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 416). And the myths in which Julian asked the pagan masses to believe were in too many cases gross indeed beside the simple and beautiful narrative of the Saviour's life.

[1] "*Degenerum et imperitorum eius theologorum piscatorum errorem*"—*Letter to Photinus*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 188.

"To the Hellenic mind the Incarnation was an almost impossible doctrine. Deification or apotheosis was as congenial to the Greeks as the Incarnation was repellent. A tragic misunderstanding arose here. On the one hand the Christians stated the Incarnation in such stark isolation from the life of mankind and in conjunction with such doctrines as the Virgin Birth and the bodily Resurrection that the Greeks failed to find therein their own high doctrine of the essential unity of the human and the divine, and of the kinship of God's spirit and the spirit of man. Consequently the most promising and fruitful Logos doctrine, which was in many aspects the real meeting place of Greek speculation and Christian theology, and which superseded the Messianic Christology of the Jews and removed the last Jewish limitation from Christianity, was forced into creedal constructions which obscured the very truth that during nine centuries the Greeks had attained in the Logos conception"—S. Angus, *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World*, p. 110.

[2] *Hymn to the Mother of the Gods*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 474.

[3] Condemnation of this practice was not lacking within the Church herself. Jerome, who approved of it thoroughly, has preserved for us a critic's gibe against the *cinerarios*. —Ep. CIX, *Corpus Script. Eccles. Latin.*, Vol. LV, p. 352.

Pauline universalism that had set up so impudent a claim of a miserable little provincial superstition, which had found its early adherents chiefly among the dregs of the urban populace, to possess the exclusive tidings of salvation for mankind. It is this last feeling that explains Julian's strange friendship for the Hebrew race, shown particularly in his famous attempt to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem. The Jews had been tenaciously faithful to their own God without seeking to foist him on the world at large, as the Galileans had done. For Jehovah of the Hebrews there would thus be an honoured place in the pantheon of the new paganism. The special favour which the Apostate showed to the Jews entitles him to be called the first of Zionists.

On a general view I think there can be little doubt that the Apostate Julian was the greatest enemy Christianity has ever known. Many have opposed specific forms of the Christian faith—Romanism or Calvinism for example—with the bitterest zeal. Many others have treated it like Hume with studied indifference, or like Gibbon with calculated scorn. Still others, like Diocletian, have been impelled to persecute it by coolly balanced reasons of state. But alone, perhaps, in history Julian, endowed with a noble nature, exceptional gifts, and indomitable force of will, devoted every ounce of his abounding energy, and all the eagerness of a great and passionate and upright soul, in a vehement campaign against the religion which, could he but have seen it, contained the only promise of better things amid the impending ruin of the ancient world. The deep and powerful intellect of Constantine, although morally he was immeasurably inferior to Julian, had grasped the great truth so strangely hidden from the finer and more generous spirit of his nephew. The shade of Constantine—a far vaster personality than Julian—may rest content with his imperishable place in history. For Julian, despite all his weaknesses and the pitiful purblindness of his career, and despite its tragic failure, there will always remain the crowning glory of intense moral grandeur. In this respect, to compare the first Christian with the last pagan Emperor is to place a satyr by the side of Hyperion.

Short as was his reign, the Apostate lived long enough to realise the utter failure and futility of his dreams. For more truly than Claudius he was playing at hazard with a bottomless dice-box. Neither

in the one direction nor in the other had his policy any lasting effect. He inflicted no real damage on the Christians, he merely irritated them. Equally transient were the results of his attempted manufacture of a theocratic and evangelistic paganism. Conversions there were, of course: fear or favour produced the inevitable crop of time-servers and faint hearts—"straggling plants," they are contemptuously called by Gregory. But the mass of the Christians recoiled in mingled fear and wrath from the blandishments of the Imperial tempter who refused to persecute. "Though they all applauded my arguments," he writes, describing an interview with the Town Council of Aleppo (*Beroea*), "very few were converted by them."[1] And upon the thinking minority the pagan Emperor's hostile propaganda was beneficial rather than otherwise. In the quaint words of John Knox: "the pregnant witt and subtill ingine of Julian the Apostate served the Churche in steede of a spurre in his tyme, and caused the godlie learned more diligently to searche the Scriptures of God then before they had done."[2]

To complete poor Julian's disillusionment, the pagans themselves displayed scant enthusiasm for his cause. "The Hellenic religion," he writes bitterly in one of his letters, "does not yet prosper as I desire, and it is the fault of those who profess it."[3] His puritan creed, with its sternly disciplined hierarchy of priests, made no appeal to the easy going devotees of the old Olympians. "The religious atmosphere of paganism," as Dr. Verrall has acutely remarked, "was not a creed at all, nor able to take any such form without self-destruction."[4] Julian could not pour the new wine of his latter-day Neoplatonic mysticism into the old bottles of Greek mythology.[5] Greatly as he misjudged Christianity, he misjudged his own Hellenism far more. It was the tragedy of the young Emperor's life that he felt himself irresistibly drawn towards two ideals, both noble, but which the whole circumstances of his epoch forbade him to reconcile. Passionately he longed for a pure and lofty faith; with wistful eagerness he clung to the

[1] *Letter to Libanius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 202.
[2] Knox, *Works*, ed. D. Laing, Vol. V, p. 258.
[3] *Letter to Arsacius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 66.
[4] *Euripides the Rationalist*, p. 80.
[5] Negri, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 246.

fading glories of a dead past. But those who shared his love of that past were mere sentimental hedonists in whom his moral earnestness awoke no response: while all the most vigorous aspiration towards purity in faith was concentrated in a religion that turned away in scornful disbelief from the past that Julian loved. In that old and sad world of the fourth century there was little room for a pagan puritan such as he was. If we may apply to Julian a striking figure of St. Augustine, he stood with his back to the light, and his face to the things enlightened: and so his face, although it clearly enough discerned the things enlightened, yet itself remained in darkness.[1] Yet it was not the fault of Julian that the choice of his life had to be made between those unhappy false alternatives, Christ and Socrates. Had the Christians of his time been able to take a less bigoted attitude towards the wisdom of the ancient world, had they recognised the *anima naturaliter Christiana* inherent in its greatest sages, had they addressed themselves to reform and revitalise instead of to repudiate decadent Hellenism, the tragic phenomenon of the Apostate would not have been —and who shall say how much else tragic besides?

Everywhere among his own supporters the Imperial pontiff found apathy or secret redicule. Were it not so pitiful, there is something infinitely ludicrous in the poor Emperor's naive confession of his disappointment when he hastened to the famous temple of Apollo at Daphne near Antioch, picturing in his ardent imagination the long processions of youths and maids attired in vestal white, the victims, libations, clouds of incense, and choruses all in honour of the God; and was greeted instead by one dejected priest, bringing from his own house a paltry goose as an offering in the cobwebby shrine! In this pathetic story is revealed the very kernel of Julian's failure:—

"In urns, and altars round
A drear and dying sound."

Moreover the Emperor himself, in zeal for his new worship, sometimes overstepped the bounds of propriety. The better sort of pagans were repelled by the spectacle of the august pontiff with his own hands piling wood for the sacrifice, kindling and blowing the fire, setting the

[1]Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk. IV, Chap. xvi.

knife to the victim's throat, and groping gruesomely amid its reeking bowels for the auguries. "God is not to be worshipped with bulls but with a devout and righteous will," Seneca long ago had said. Julian's superstitious regard for divination is a distressing reminder of how greatly a noble and enlightened intellect can become warped and darkened through the cumulative working of an initial bias.[1] Again, the Emperor's love of religious pageantry led him to take part in local festivals without pausing to enquire whether these were not sometimes haunts of secret vice. Deeply sensible of the corruption and fanaticism of the Christians; rightly proud of his own philosophical toleration and austerity; anxious to show, in his Imperial person, of what high standards the new paganism would be capable: Julian could not always escape, perhaps did not wish to escape, making a kind of propaganda of his own virtue; and thereby incurred inevitably the stigma of vanity. His profound consciousness of his own mission shaded easily into self-conceit: men remarked in him a *cupido laudis immodica*.[2] There was undoubtedly a strong vein of the histrionic in his nature. We cannot shut our eyes to the element of truth voiced in the epigram of La Bléterie, who remarks that Julian's modesty was a refinement of pride worse than the vanity of Constantius.[3] Too often he became merely, in the phrase of Nietzsche, "the play-actor of his own ideal." His judicious admirer, Ammian, candidly admits that he was over much a seeker after empty glory.[4] He professed to model his conduct upon the example of Marcus Aurelius, yet he lacked both the dignity and the self-control of his Stoic predecessor. And lastly, with all his acuteness he was a poor judge of men, and so was frequently taken in by fraudulent self-seekers such as Maximus seems to have been.[5] "Learn to distinguish the flatterer from the true counsellor," Zeus had said on

[1]In justice to Julian, however, one must remember that superstition was a vice of the times. The pages even of the sober and matter-of-fact soldier-historian Ammian bristle with prodigies and magic. And it is this same writer who tells us that in the fourth century even the avowed atheist could not go on a journey without casting a horoscope.

[2]Aurelius Victor, *Epitome de Caesaribus*, Chap. xliii.

[3]*La plupart trouvoient . . . qu'une modestie si déplacée étoit un rafinement d' orgueil, pire que le luxe et le faste de Constance—Vie de Julien*, p. 132.

[4]*Nimius captator inanis gloriae*—Bk. XXII, Chap. vii, 3; *cf.* Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 18.

[5]Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, §§ 200-3, endeavours, not very successfully, to explain away this weakness in his hero's character.

dismissing him for his appointed task on earth: but this is just what poor Julian seems never to have been able to do, at all events among those who professed to support his revival of paganism. The sophists whom he gathered about him threatened to become as great a public nuisance as the bishops who had buzzed around Constantius. Julian always preferred a priest to a philosopher, and a sorcerer to both; and in the course of his short reign he certainly managed to collect about him a queer lot of quacks. Etruscan soothsayers reappeared in his camp as in the armies of the early Republic.

The tragedy of Julian, like that of Oedipus, resides in the twofold fact that he was in the main noble, and that his sufferings were self-inflicted. The fundamental mystery about the psychological problem with which we are confronted in his career lies in his dual personality, in the unresolved discord between his two natures. On the one hand we have the hard old Roman, the clear-sighted practical statesman, the audacious and resolute soldier, the swift and masterful strategist, the beneficent ruler whose administrative measures and legislation betoken so firm a grasp upon the urgent needs and inward cancer of his Empire. On the other hand we seem to have the unpractical dreaming eastern visionary, vainly trying to enlist the sympathy of a hostile, mocking, or at best indifferent world in carrying out a religious policy which showed only that he had totally misread the whole trend of his time. In our endeavour to find the key to this amazing dualism in the personality of the great Emperor, we turn naturally to the brilliant Russian writer who has clothed the tragedy of Julian in the garb of glowing literature. But Merezhkovski's Julian does not seem to be quite the Julian of history. For one thing, he is too neurotic: and again, Julian in *The Death of the Gods* is too much the mere conservative, the blindly obstinate and sad reactionary who in his own words "loves the evening more than the morning, the autumn better than spring, and over whose soul remembrance has greater power than hope."[1] The real Julian was something different and more subtle. Profoundly as he went astray in his main assumption that the revival of paganism was feasible, yet in the detailed working out of his

[1] *The Death of the Gods*, transl. H. Trench, p. 283.

religious policy he displayed a just perception of the need to adapt the ancient polytheism to the altered requirements of his own time. His scheme of "a federation of all existing cults into a pagan Church Catholic, realising its intellectual unity in the doctrines of Neoplatonism, its administrative in the person of the Emperor, its head,"[1] was a boldly original conception, not the work of a blear-eyed and jejune reactionary. And behind all the superficial dualism of his outlook there yet lurked a fundamental unity: for Julian, struggling against barbarians without and Christians within his realm, seemed in his own eyes always to be fighting a battle for civilisation. He at least would have appreciated the truth in the famous epigram with which Gibbon sums up his history of the decline and fall of the Empire: "I have described the triumph of barbarism and of religion."

If then we endeavour in this sense to estimate the historical results of Julian's career, we are forced to the sad conclusion that the main aim of his life ended in almost absolute failure. Almost, yet not quite: for to the influence of his reactionary movement we may not unfairly ascribe the more or less complete cessation of anti-pagan legislation by the Christian Emperors who succeeded him, until in 382 the decisive campaign against the lingering remnants of an effete heathendom was undertaken by Theodosius and Gratian, with Ambrose at their backs. A generation of respite, if nothing else, was gained for dying Hellenism by Julian's forlorn hope. It is possible also that to the pagan revival of his reign we should trace back the temporary efflorescence in art and literature which marks the latter part of the fourth century—as shown by the powerful portraiture of the famous bust of Julian himself at Acerenza, by the diptych of Symmachus, by the splendidly dignified Barletta statue ascribed to Valentinian, and one or two other artistic products of the age; and in the realm of letters by the poetry of Ausonius, Claudian and Rutilius Namatianus.[2] But even this is doubtful, for the pagan literary revival of the fourth century was confined to the Latin world, and Julian's influence was almost wholly exerted in the Greek speaking east.

[1] G. W. Rendall, *The Emperor Julian, Paganism and Christianity* (Hulsean Essay, 1876). See Lyttleton, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

[2] Salomon Reinach in *Revue Archéologique*, 3rd Series, Vol. XXXVIII, Part I, pp. 355-6.

On the administrative side Julian's work had more lasting effects. His vigorous reorganisation of Gaul outlived his reign[1]; and alike in the civil and military departments his policy here was carried on with conspicuous energy and success by Valentinian—who, sadist though he was, will always bear honourable rank in the long list of Roman rulers by virtue of his integrity and his unsparing dedication of great physical and mental powers to a highly exalted sense of Imperial stewardship. Yet no Emperor, however active and capable, could have stemmed the inevitable deluge of barbarism, or breathed new life into the decaying society of the Celto-Latin west. Here Roman civilisation, essentially an urban product, was artificially engrafted on to a society basically tribal, and the hybrid growth could not thrive. In the east, where an older urban civilisation, stronger in resources and more highly organised, was merely incorporated in the Imperial system, the tempest of barbarism was weathered, and the Empire stood for yet a dozen centuries. But although Julian's achievement in Gaul was doomed to perish, his brilliant work of reorganisation and manful repulse of the invaders secured the west a few precious years of respite: and, with each year of life thus hardly purchased, the Empire could extend her softening and civilising influence over the Teutonic races who were so soon to achieve her overthrow. In one direction, at least, the Apostate's battle for civilisation was thus not wholly fought in vain. With the larger vision and the truer perspective that comes in looking back across the centuries, we can see now that all such efforts were ultimately bound to fail, that no human endeavour, however high and strenuous, could resuscitate the moribund Empire or avert the Teutonic conquest. Nay more, we can see that in the inscrutable design of Providence it was well that these efforts should fail. Out of the revival of the exhausted Latin peoples by the infiltration of new races, and the blending of Graeco-Roman civilisation with the fire and chivalry of the north, would emerge the brilliance of the Middle Ages, and, in the fulness of time, the modern European polity. But all this was hidden from Julian—"the last figure standing on the shore of the

[1]Ambrose in his *Oration on the Death of Valentinian*, Chap. xxi, tells us how Julian's memory was still gratefully cherished by the western provinces at the end of the century.

ancient world," as a modern essayist has finely described him.[1] If the young Emperor's efforts were foredoomed to failure, he is none the less entitled to full credit for his gallant defence of a sinking world.

It is instructive to contrast the policy of Julian with that of his great successor, Theodosius, the last of the Caesars who ruled over the whole Roman Empire. Like Julian *"propagator rei publicae atque defensor eximius,"*[2] Theodosius struggled valorously, and with all the hardness and tenacity of an old Roman, against the outward and inward foes of the Empire. His exertions, like those of Julian, procured for the declining realm a precarious and brief respite: how brief, and how precarious, the miserable reigns of his feeble sons would show; for within fifteen years of the strong-handed Emperor's death (A.D. 395) the fleece-clad warriors of Alaric were gathering the spoils of the Eternal City herself. But Theodosius was not content, as other Emperors—Julian among the rest—had been content before him, merely to defeat the Goths, the Franks and the Sarmatians on the field of battle. Unlike his predecessors, he combined statecraft with arms, and sought deliberately (it would seem) to assimilate these obdurate Nordic masses, to enlist them in defence of the Empire whose sides they rent, and thus in time to win their better natures in the cause of civilisation. He saw, perhaps, that the racial stocks of the ancient world were outworn, and he may have dreamed to replenish them from the teeming reservoirs of the north. But such a task was not to be achieved by the Roman Caesar. The Teutons would accomplish it themselves on their own account, and before the ground was cleared for their experiment the rotten fabric of the Empire must be swept away, with all the dusty lumber that it contained. Across its corpse the young nations and the young Church would then join hands and frame a new world.[3]

On one side of his career Theodosius may thus be regarded as carrying on the work of Julian. But in another respect he effected a complete reversal of the Apostate's policy. Julian could see in Christianity nothing but a root-cause of the decadence of Rome, and had sought to revive his senile Empire by invoking the offended majesty

[1]*Nine Essays*, by Arthur Platt, p. 140.
[2]Victor, *Epitome*, Chap. xlviii.
[3]Richter, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

of the ancient Gods. To his mind, the new combination of the Ch with the K, as he denotes it, of Christ with Constantius, that is, of Galilean superstition with Roman imperialism, had seemed something altogether unnatural, detestable and pernicious. With far truer insight, Theodosius recognised in Christianity a force that could conserve what yet remained of the culture of the classical world, and might be the medium of passing it on to those northern races by whom, whether as friends or foes of the Empire, the future would clearly more and more be shaped. Moreover, it was "the God of Theodosius," he felt with an utter conviction, Who had won for him his decisive victory on the banks of the Frigidus. And so he struck in with his famous *Nullus omnino*, exerting all his Imperial authority to crush out the last clogging vestiges of an effete paganism, and to establish orthodox Christianity as the official creed of the civilised world. Outside the Church there is no salvation, Cyprian had declared: and now Theodosius interpreted the dictum in a political and social rather than in an eschatological sense. Inevitably thus he was a persecutor, alike of pagans and of heretics; and in this respect the conduct of the Christian Emperor is sometimes unfavourably contrasted with that of his heathen predecessor. But toleration was not a virtue of the times, and those who justly praise Julian for his unique example should at least recognise the contrary implication in their judgment of Theodosius. If Julian is rightly lauded for a virtue peculiarly his own, Theodosius is surely entitled to leniency for a fault that belonged to his age: the age in which, ere long, even an Augustine would sponsor the policy of *"cogite intrare."* At all events the Christian Emperor must be accorded the palm for possessing that highest gift of a statesman, namely, the ability to divine the future, and by his own action to assist in shaping it. The medieval world, a world in which Teutonic peoples settled on the soil of the old Empire, and inheriting its cultural traditions, were united by the bonds of a common faith, was a product of many complex influences; but not the least potent among these was the action of Theodosius in securing the triumph of orthodox Christianity as the religion of the future. Doubtless that triumph was in any case inevitable; yet it is the glory of Theodosius that he foresaw it and helped forward its consummation.

When Julian sent his great friend, the distinguished physician Oribasius, to Delphi to ascertain whether it was feasible to restore the temple there, he received from Pytho the famous response which Swinburne has so beautifully translated as "The Last Oracle." It may be regarded as the verdict of the times upon the Apostate's effort to restore the "glory that was Greece":—

Εἴπατε τῷ βασιλῆι, χαμαὶ πέσε δαίδαλος αὐλά.
οὐκέτι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλύβαν, οὐ μάντιδα δάφνην,
οὐ παγὰν λαλέουσαν· ἀπέσβετο καὶ λάλον ὕδωρ.

"Tell the King, on earth has fallen the glorious dwelling,
And the water-springs that spake are quenched and dead.
Not a cell is left the God, no roof, no cover,
In his hand the prophet laurel flowers no more."

Yet whatever final criticism may be passed upon Julian, the great fact will always remain that he was by far and away the most brilliant and most high-minded among the later Roman Emperors; and that all his versatile gifts and the ample measure of his strong, athletic soul should have been so pitifully squandered in a wild-goose chase must be regarded as one of the most mysterious and poignant tragedies that history can show.

Each of the two theological treatises which Julian has left us—the *Hymn to King Helios* and the *Hymn to the Mother of the Gods*—closes with a passionate and beautiful prayer, reminding us that (despite much about his philosophical writings that may strike us as abstract to the point of sterility or aridness) no explanation of Julian's personality is worth considering unless it takes into full account the fundamental fact of his deeply religious nature. In particular, the enthusiastic prayer which concludes the hymn to *Magna Mater* must be deemed one of the noblest spiritual utterances of antiquity. It is the heartfelt cry of a man whose earnestness and devotion to truth will always evoke our warmest admiration, however much we may think that in his approach to his ideal he was mistaken:—

"Do Thou grant to all men happiness, and that highest happiness of all, knowledge of the Gods; and grant to the Roman people that they may cleanse themselves of the stain of impiety; grant them a blessed lot, and help them to guide their Empire for many

thousands of years! And for myself, grant me as fruit of my worship of Thee that I may have true knowledge in divine doctrine! Make me perfect in divine works! And in all that I undertake, alike in government and in arms, grant me virtue and good fortune, and that the close of my life may be painless and glorious, in the good hope that it is You to Whom I journey!"[1]

For the Roman Empire the hour had struck, and Julian's prayer might not be granted. For himself a compassionate Deity had prepared the end that he desired.

[1]Wright, Vol. I, p. 502.

V.

Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖν μοι δοκεῖτε τῆς τῶν τελευταίων καὶ μεγίστων ἀκοῆς, ἃ Πέρσας καὶ τὴν ἐκείνων γῆν ἐπιστρατεύσας διέθηκε. καὶ θαυμαστὸν οὐδὲν, εἰ πάλαι πρὸς ταύτην τὴν μερίδα κεχήνατε, τὸ μὲν κεφάλαιον εἰδότες, ὡς νικῶν ἔπιπτε.

—Libanius, *Funeral Oration on Julian*, § 204.

"Wilt thou trust Death or not?" He answered "Yes:
Hence with Life's pale lure!"
That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.

—Browning, *A Grammarian's Funeral.*

AMID the cares of world-Empire, the articulation of his religious schemes, and the preparations for his campaign against Persia, Julian by rigorous organisation of his life found time to continue his philosophic studies and literary diversions. His admiring friend, the sophist Libanius, has left us a remarkable picture of the young Emperor's tireless industry and unremitting self-discipline. "On the same day," he writes, "he would respond to several ambassadors, despatch letters to various cities, to the army commanders, and to his friends: he would listen to the reading of dispatches and examine requests, with such speed that his secretariat were unable to keep pace with his dictation. After a morning spent thus he had a light lunch, and then resting amid his books he read aloud,[1] until in the afternoon his attention was once more claimed by affairs of State. His supper was even more frugal than his lunch, and his hours of sleep were few. Thereafter in the middle of the night appeared another staff of

[1]This excellent practice was universal in the ancient world. One recalls how the young Augustine noted it as a remarkable circumstance that St. Ambrose was accustomed in his study to read in silence, so as to rest his voice, which was weak. Negri does not seem to have rightly understood this passage of Libanius.

secretaries, who had spent the day in bed. Thus though his labours varied he rested never, but renewed the transformations of Proteus, alternately appearing in the character of priest, writer, augur, judge, and soldier, but always as a saviour!"[1] The Emperor had the pleasing quality of paying all due credit to the efficiency of his subordinates, and in one of his letters he has testified to the ability and enthusiasm of his personal staff. "It is true," he writes, "that continuous attention to public business is thought to be a heavy burden on men who pursue it with all their energy: but those who share the task of administration with me are, I am satisfied, honest and reasonable men, entirely capable for all they have to do. So they give me rest and leisure without my neglecting anything."[2]

Julian has left a large and varied correspondence, public and private, which forms one of the most interesting literary monuments of the later Empire. To his own busy pen is mainly due the fact that, as Salomon Reinach has remarked, we know more about Julian, his personality, his motives and his actions, than about any other figure in antiquity, with the sole exception of Cicero.[3] "Few men have ever let mankind see into their inmost feelings as he did."[4] He writes in pure and elegant Greek, not altogether free from the mannerisms of his age, but certainly far less "cumbered with exhausted phrase" than the style of most of his contemporaries. A recent critic not unrightly claims that Julian's letters "yield to no others in the history of literature, either in felicity of form, or in the interest of the matter which they contain."[5]

Amid much that is artificial or conventional in his correspondence, there emerges again and again the vivid personality of the man, and in particular his keen interest in all manner of things and his power of describing, with a few brief, crisp touches, scenes and incidents by which he had been struck. We have already instanced examples of this in his account of the Bithynian estate and in his description of Paris during winter: we shall later on quote another case of it in his

[1] Libanius, *Funeral Oration*, § 174; Negri, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 478-9.
[2] *Letter to Basil*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 80.
[3] *Revue Archéologique*, Series 3, Vol. XXXVIII, Part I, p. 337.
[4] Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, p. 48.
[5] A. Fitzgerald, *Essays and Hymns of Synesius*, Vol. I, p. 52.

last letter written to Libanius from Hierapolis. One or two other examples may here be given. What, for instance, could be more complete in its way than the vignette which he gives of Besançon, writing to his friend the philosopher Maximus. "It is a little town that has lately been restored, but in ancient times it was a large city adorned with costly temples, and was fortified by a strong wall and further by the nature of the place; for it is encircled by the river Doubs. It rises up like a rocky cliff in the sea, inaccessible, I might almost say, to the very birds, except in those places where the river as it flows round it throws out what I may call beaches, that lie in front of it."[1] The same observation and love of nature peeps forth in a letter to another friend, written on the eve of his departure for the Persian campaign. "The first signs of spring are here already," he says; "the trees are in bud, and the swallows, which are expected almost immediately, as soon as they come will drive us campaigners out of doors, and remind us that we ought to be over the border."[2] And as with the simple things of nature, so also Julian is keenly observant of human habits and actions. He was greatly struck with the Gaulish custom of testing the legitimacy of babies by throwing them into the Rhine, much like the ordeal once applied to witches in our own country.[3] He has also left on record his impression of the harsh-sounding folk-songs of the Germans as they floated over the Rhine to the Roman outposts along the frontier river. Second-rate minstrels, he caustically comments, may enrage their audiences, but they vastly please themselves.[4] A new thing which he met with in Gaul was beer: he has given us a little rhymed and punning epigram on his first impression of it—it did not smell of nectar, like the wines to which he had been accustomed in the East, but stank like a goat, he remarks with robust aversion.[5] Another clever little poem was evoked by the sight of a wind-blown organ, then something of a rarity.[6] Julian's poetic vein was not above being wholesomely broad on occasion, as in his epigram on the Hippocentaur.[7] One tiny

[1] *Letter to Maximus*, Wright, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 22.
[2] *Letter to Philip*, *ibid.*, p. 108.
[3] *Letter to Eugenius*, *ibid.*, p. 210; *cf.* Libanius, *On Julian's Consulship*, § 48.
[4] *Misopogon*, Wright, Vol. II, p. 422.
[5] Wright, Vol. III, p. 304.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*

poem he has left us of quite outstanding pathos and beauty, the four lines on his own tragic destiny, of which a translation is attempted at the head of Section II in the present essay.

In addition to the letters, Julian found time—apparently during the winter of 362-3—to compose his great polemic against the Galileans, of which a part only has survived. Moreover, at various odd moments he threw off minor literary efforts, such as his two Orations against the Cynics, and his famous fable of the *Banquet of the Caesars,* written for the Saturnalia of 361. This is decidedly the most original of all Julian's compositions. To celebrate the festival the Gods invite the deified Roman Emperors to a banquet spread in the upper air below the Moon. After the Gods are seated, the Emperors enter one by one, amid the sardonic comments of old Silenus, who provides the comic relief of Julian's singular little skit upon his predecessors. Before the dinner the Gods decide to hold a competition to see who was the best ruler. A short leet is selected from the Emperors, and Alexander the Great is called in as the only possible rival to Julius Caesar. Each candidate is allowed to address the tribunal on his own behalf, and the various speeches, together with the caustic running commentary of old Silenus, and the severe cross-examination of the disputants by Hermes, afford Julian the opportunity to display much acute perception, deep historical knowledge, and not a little humour. As one would expect from such an author, the palm is at length awarded to Marcus Aurelius, who defines his rule of life as "to have as few wants as possible, and to do the greatest amount of good."[1] In comparing Julian himself with this, his own description of the predecessor whom he chose as the pattern of his life, we may indeed concede that he lacked the poise and the self-discipline of the Stoic Emperor; but we must also add that neither did he suffer from the narrow, almost selfish individualism inherent in the strictly ethical Stoic outlook—even as represented by a Marcus Aurelius. Julian, in common with his time, shows a far more active corporate sense, an operative ***philanthropy*** in the full meaning which the fourth century gave to this word—as developed, for example, by Julian himself in his *Letter to a Priest.*

[1] δεῖσθαι μὲν ὡς ἐλαχίστων, εὖ ποιεῖν δὲ ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα πλείστους—Wright, Vol. II, p. 408.

PLATE IV.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

Head from a colossal marble statue: now in the court of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome. Height, 7 ft. $10\frac{5}{6}$ in.

See E. Strong, *La Scultura Romana da Augusto a Costantino*, p. 410 and Fig. 252; E. Stein, *Geschichte des Spätrömischen Reiches*, Vol. I, pp. xii-xiii, with authorities cited.

(Reproduced from Stein, op. cit., Plate 4, by courtesy of Messrs. L. W. Seidel & Son, Vienna.)

But the most interesting feature of Julian's extraordinary *jeu d'esprit* is the caricature which he deftly limns of his uncle, the first Christian Emperor. Constantine's achievements, he says, are like flowers in a vase, fair to see, yet bound to die. Only after much hesitation do the Gods allow him a place on the leet. At the end of the contest each participant is allowed to choose his own patron among the Gods. "After this announcement," writes Julian, "Alexander hastened to Heracles, and Octavian to Apollo, but Marcus attached himself closely to Zeus and Kronos. Caesar wandered about for a long time until Ares and Aphrodite took pity on him. Trajan hurried after Alexander. As for Constantine, he could not discover among the Gods the archetype of his own life, but catching sight of Pleasure he ran to her.[1] She embracing him dressed him up in many-coloured raiment and then led him, thus smartened, to Incontinence. There too he found Jesus, who had taken up his abode with Incontinence,[2] and cried aloud to all 'He that is a seducer, he that is a murderer, he that is sacrilegious and of ill fame, let him approach and fear not! For with this water will I wash him and will straightway make him clean. Yea, though he may sin in the same way a second time, let him but smite his breast and beat his head, and I will make him clean again!' "[3] What a shocking travesty of the

[1]Julian, of course, would have heard most about Constantine as he was during the later degenerate period of his reign. On this subject Dr. Glover (*Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, p. 75, footnote) makes the astonishing statement that "Constantine displays, though with fluctuations, a gradual development of high character from his accession to Empire onwards through life." Nothing could be more utterly at variance with all our evidence. *Cf.* Victor, *Epitome*, Chap. xli: *decem annis praestantissimus, duodecim sequentibus latro, decem novissimis pupillus ob profusiones immodicas nominatus"*; also Eutropius, Bk. X, Chaps. vi and vii: *"verum insolentia rerum secundarum aliquantum Constantinus ex illa favorabili animi docilitate mutavit . . . vir primo imperii tempore optimis principibus, ultimo mediis comparandus."* The testimony of Ammian (Bk. XVI, Chap. viii, 12) and Zosimus (Bk. II, Chaps. xxxii, xxxv) is precisely similar—though Zosimus must be read with caution in view of his unconcealed bias against the first Christian Emperor.

[2]This is probably a horrible gibe at the doctrine of the Virgin Birth!

[3]Wright, Vol. II, p. 412. This very serious accusation against Christianity, that it formed a sanctuary wherein the most sordid criminals could find in the *myesis* of baptism an easy absolution for their evil-doing, was no new reproach: it had been previously made by Celsus, and was refuted by Origen (*Against Celsus*, Book III, Chap. xlix). Julian doubtless had in mind the fact that the first Christian Emperor, after a life deeply stained with crime, had accepted baptism only on his deathbed. Constantius also, though a far more zealous Christian than his father ever was, followed the same comfortable practice. At the close of his oration to the Cynic Heraclius, Julian vigorously denounces the ideas

Christian faith and its Founder have we here, and how blind is the prejudice thus revealed in the Apostate's soul! Yet we must remember that what Julian pilloried with such ringing scorn was not so much the teaching of Christ as the Christianity of his own day, the eastern Church, depraved and unashamed, as he knew her in the fourth century. No more pungent and absolute condemnation of the Church in that age can be found than in the simple fact that to Julian, a man of pure life and upright soul, the resuscitation of Hellenism for which he strove seemed the only hope for the triumph of those very ideals of morality for which Christ Himself had stood.[1]

Besides his administrative reforms and his restoration of paganism, the third main object of Julian's reign was the humiliation of Persia. The Sassanid kingdom had revealed itself as a formidable military power, which during the late reign had wrought much scathe in the eastern provinces and remained a constant menace. The honour of the Empire had been laid in the dust: and now the proud oriental potentate who had insulted the weakness of Constantius would be taught by his successor of a different mettle to respect the majesty of Rome. No longer, decided Julian, must the Empire mingle its drink with weeping. It is clear that there were valid grounds of policy behind Julian's campaign, and while the love of glory—"the last garment which a man discards," as he himself finely describes it[2]—doubtless had a place in his

underlying it. "The Gods," he says (Wright, Vol. II, p. 160), "reserve their rewards without stint for those whose lives have earned them the right to be initiated, even though they have not gone through the ceremony, whereas the wicked gain nothing by penetrating within the sacred precincts." It must be remembered that in Christian theory of the fourth century baptism had already developed from a dramatic into a quasi-magical rite. Mücke, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 188, points to the following New Testament passages which probably inspired Julian's sneer: Matth. XI, 19 and 28; Mark XVI, 16; Luke VII, 34, and XV, 2; Acts II, 38, and XXII, 16; I Cor. V, 1, and VI, 9-11.

[1]Much the best analysis of and commentary upon Julian's masterpiece that I have come across is contained in a very scarce Breslau school examination programme of 1856: *Zur öffentlichen Prüfung der Schüler des hiesigen Gymnasiums zu St. Maria Magdalena, welche zum Beschlusse des Schuljahres am 13 und 14 März im Prüfungs-Saale veranstaltet werden soll, sowie zu der Redeübung am 15 März 1856, ladet ehrerbietigst ein Dr Carl Schönborn, Director, Rector und Professor, Ritter des rothen Adler-Orders IV classe. I. Dr Cauer über die Caesares des Kaisers Julianus Apostata. II. Schulnachrichten, verfasst vom Director.*

[2]τὸν ἔσχατον ἀναβάσασθαι χιτῶνα τῆς φιλοτιμίας—*The Heroic Deeds of Constantius*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 254.

motives, the expedition was by no means undertaken purely in order to indulge the Emperor's pride of arms. Certainly it is quite beside the mark to talk of his "tragic ambition to emulate the achievements of Alexander the Great."[1] It was doubtless his wish, but it was no less clearly his duty, to earn for himself the title *Parthicus*.[2] That Julian cherished no dreams of limitless Asiatic conquest, but intended strictly and solely a punitive expedition of a single summer's duration, to be followed, as he hoped, by a triumphant peace, is sufficiently proved by the simple fact that before commencing operations he designated Tarsus as the place where the army was to winter after the conclusion of the campaign.[3] And, after all, the war was not of Julian's making: he inherited it from his predecessor, who bequeathed to him a legacy of disaster and shame that the highest considerations of policy, indeed of self-respect, urged him to efface. "Roman blood was not yet dry on the Persian sword,"[4] he said. The whole subsequent course of Romano-Persian history, down to the reign of Heraclius, is one long commentary on the soundness of Julian's view. We have his own statement of his reasons for undertaking the campaign, and surely it is no loud-mouthed war-whoop of a megalomaniac militarist. "We are moved to undertake these expeditions which we have intended," he said to his troops,

[1]N. H. Baynes in *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. I, p. 78. The origin of all such high flown comparisons will be found in the jaundiced view of Socrates, Bk. III, Chap. XX.

[2]Mücke, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 114.

[3]Ammian, Bk. XXIII, Chap. ii, 5. Mr. Baynes himself (*op. cit.*, p. 82) countenances the view that Julian's plan of campaign had been from the first to return by the Tigris and not the Euphrates, but does not seem to realise that this was neither the policy nor the strategy of an Alexander.

[4]"*Natio molestissima, cuius in gladiis nondum nostrae propinquitatis exaruit cruor*": Speech of Julian in Ammian, Bk. XXIII, Chap. v, 19. At Bk. XXV, Chap. iv, 23, the old historian, whose judgment in such a matter ought surely to carry great weight, speaks with no uncertain voice: "*Et quoniam eum obtrectatores novos bellorum tumultus ad perniciem rei communis insimulant concitasse, sciant docente veritate perspicue, non Iulianum sed Constantium ardores Parthicos succendisse . . . unde caesi ad indignationem exercitus nostri, capti militares aliquotiens numeri, urbes excisae, rapta munimenta vel diruta, provinciae gravibus impensis exhaustae, et ad effectum tendentibus minis cuncta patiebantur a Persis adusque Bithynos et litora Propontidis.*" These emphatic words of the great historian who was Julian's contemporary, and who most certainly was not lacking either in military or in political judgment, supply a conclusive answer to all later criticisms. Even Dr. Glover, who shows so little capacity of understanding the Apostate, is just to him in this particular: "he meant to end the long-standing Persian quarrel which Constantius had left unsettled"—*Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, p. 72.

"by occasion of the woeful and miserable case of cities newly forced, of the unrevenged ghosts of whole armies put to the sword, of the great damages sustained, and the loss of our dear friends: to the end we may give comfort to our allies, redress and remedy hurts past, and by procuring an honourable security unto the Commonwealth on this coast of the world, leave unto posterity matter sufficient, for which they may give us a noble report and commendation another day."[1]

So in the late spring of 362 the Emperor set his face again towards the east. Eastward, always eastward, toward the rising Sun, had been the irresistible call ever since that day when at his "beloved Lutetia" the collar of the standard-bearer of the Petulantes was clasped as an improvised diadem round his unwilling brow. He himself speaks of his march against Constantius as his "return (*κάθοδος*) from the west."[2] It seemed as if his patron deity, Father Helios himself, was ever beckoning his ardent disciple onwards towards that union of his mystical imaginings—that integration with his Supreme Godhead which the Sun-God's votary, *felix opportunitate mortis,* was to achieve at length under the burning skies of Assyria.

Early in July, 362, Julian arrived at Antioch.[3] His collision with the capital of the east—*Orientis apicem pulchrum,*[4] as Ammian lovingly describes his native city—is one of the most celebrated and colourful incidents of his life. The motley population, or at all events their major portion,[5] were fanatically Christian, and were given over, Christians no less than pagans, to every vice and luxury. On both

[1] Ammian, Bk. XXIII, Chap. v: Holland, p. 226. Libanius in one of his letters very rightly describes the campaign as a "war of requital"—*ἀμυνόμενος ἐστράτευται*—Letter 1341 in *Opera*, ed. R. Förster, Vol. XI, p. 395.

[2] *Letter to Proaeresius*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 34.

[3] For the chronology of his march from Constantinople see Sievers, *Libanius*, pp. 247-8.

[4] Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. ix, 14. At this time, as we learn from a letter of Libanius (No. 1119, ed. Förster, Vol. XI, p. 224), Antioch contained about 150,000 inhabitants. This letter appears to have escaped the notice of P. C. Baur, *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit*, p. 29, who estimates the population at anything up to half-a-million. Chrysostom himself gives the population at about 200,000. Our estimates of the populations of ancient cities are usually exaggerated. Julian (*Panegyric on Constantius*, Wright, Vol. I, p. 104) tells us that Constantius had done much to beautify the city, a fact the remembrance of which would not help to predispose the citizens towards a friendly feeling for his successful rival. For Antioch at this period see also Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-7, with authorities cited.

[5] On this point see a useful word of caution in Geffcken, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

counts they had no sympathy with the Emperor, whose religion they detested, and whose care for conduct and puritan habits evoked their ribald scorn. The Patriarch Meletius was a man of noble character, but Julian does not seem to have come in contact with him. The Emperor annoyed the populace by putting in a perfunctory attendance at the public games, and still more by his tactless remark that such exhibitions interested him less than frogs in the puddles. The antique Hellenic garments which he affected, and his long philosopher's beard, afforded an inexhaustible source of fun to the frivolous Antiochenes. His soldiers got drunk and misbehaved themselves, particularly those of the Gallic regiments. To make matters worse, a scarcity of provisions, aggravated by the immense concentration of troops for the forthcoming campaign, set in during the Emperor's residence. Julian took prompt measures to meet the emergency; but his intervention was marked by that ignorance of political economy which seems characteristic of ruling powers in all ages, and the upshot merely was to make a serious shortage worse. The disgust and indignation of the Antiochenes found vent in an outburst of scurrilous lampoons upon the Emperor and his religion. Julian was deeply affronted. Under similar circumstances, twenty-four years later, the Christian Emperor Theodosius would exact a heavy penalty from the offending town. The heathen Julian, "holding in his passion within the power of his mind,"[1] enjoyed a nobler and a more memorable revenge. Instead of inflicting condign punishment, he contented himself with publishing the most singular of all his literary achievements, the celebrated satire of the *Misopogon*, or "Enemy of the Beard," in which under cover of a quaintly humorous description of his own person, idiosyncracies, and upbringing, the philosophic Emperor inflicted by contrast a biting criticism upon the dissolute and flippant character of the Antiochenes. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of an Emperor having recourse to pamphleteering, it is a perfect travesty of the facts to describe the *Misopogon* as "perhaps as undignified a production as was ever penned by a monarch" or to discover in it nothing but "a painful littleness."[2] All such armchair

[1] "*Motum in animi retinens potestate*," Ammian, Bk. XXII, Chap. xiv, 3—a strong phrase; Holland, p. 209.

[2] Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, p. 72: Arthur Platt, *Nine Essays*, p. 106.

criticism forgets that in writing it Julian, insulted as he justly felt himself to have been, and exercising as he did unbounded powers of life and death over those who had offended him, manifested true greatness of soul in that he did not forthwith have recourse to the drastic chastisement which in a like case his Christian successor inflicted—a chastisement which itself was regarded as lenient by the miserable population who had expected something greatly worse. Considered as an abstract literary production, the *Misopogon* may not altogether square with our own ideas of Imperial dignity: but considered in relation to its circumstances and the times, it must be accounted a rare monument of an autocrat's self-restraint. Yet it is noticeable that towards the end of his discourse real anger gleams through Julian's satire, and we can recognise in this composition the bitter disillusionment which the young Emperor was undergoing in regard to the most cherished dream of his life.

While Julian was in residence at Antioch, the famous temple of Apollo, built by Antiochus Epiphanes at Daphne, on the outskirts of the city, took fire (22nd October, 362), under highly suspicious circumstances. The whole splendid building, with the magnificent statue of the God, which men compared with that of Zeus at Olympus, was totally consumed. Rightly or wrongly, the Emperor concluded that the Christians must be to blame: certainly their behaviour, during and after the conflagration, gave him every ground for such an opinion. On the questionable principle of tit for tat, Antioch Cathedral was closed, and its revenues ingathered into the Imperial treasury. We may gather from this unpleasant incident that Julian's temper was becoming very dangerously rasped: and we may well believe that, had he returned flushed with victory from Persia, it might have fared ill both with the Christians and with Julian's own reputation in history.

For his attack upon Persia the Emperor mustered a total force of over 80,000 men.[1] This powerful concentration was divided into two

[1]Zosimus, Bk. III, Chap. xiii. For the numbers see Dr. Rheinhardt, *Der Perserkrieg des Kaisers Julian*, in *X Jahresbericht des Herzoglichen Friedrichs-Realgymnasiums* in Dessau, 1892, p. 22, note 4. Rheinhardt's essay is a most valuable critical analysis of Julian's campaign. He has clearly demonstrated that the accounts of Ammian, Libanius and Zosimus—in so far as the first of these did not draw from his personal experiences—

armies, of which one, under the marshals Procopius and Sebastian, was to traverse Armenia, join forces with its King Arsaces, and descend the Tigris, while Julian himself at the head of the main army, 65,000 strong, proposed to invade Assyria by the valley of the Euphrates, following in the footsteps of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand. For the wonderful campaign that followed we are fortunate in possessing the full and soldierly account of Ammian, who took part in it himself, and whose brilliant narrative, with all its wealth of picturesque detail, is not unworthy of a place beside Xenophon's *Anabasis*. From now onward, under his skilful guidance, our story becomes one of tuck of drum and bray of trumpet, and events move swiftly to their fated climax with a rush and surge of battle that remind one of the superb relief on the Villa Ludovisi sarcophagus, or of Raphael's mighty fresco of the Milvian Bridge.

The story of Julian's last campaign, as narrated by Ammian, is replete in every chapter with thrilling incident. It is a tale of battle, march and skirmish: of desperate passages at arms and hairbreadth escapes: of sudden forays, affairs of outposts, individual gallant exploits, brushes with clouds of brightly uniformed Persian light horse, stubborn conflicts with massed elephants and heavy cavalry clad from head to foot in flexible armour of overlapping iron scales. The Persians were audacious, skilful and unresting foes; we read of daring raids upon Roman supply columns and even on the horses' lines in the heart of their camp. Every form of military enterprise figures in this remarkable war: there are amphibious operations against an island fortress, and formal sieges of large towns, attacked and defended with all the engineering resources of the age. During one such siege the Roman master of the ordnance, not unlike James II of Scotland before Roxburgh, was accidentally killed by the discharge of one of his own catapults faultily loaded. The usages of ancient warfare were at all times barbarous, and in this campaign of Julian there are systematic devastations of the countryside with fire and sword, and promiscuous

are all based on a common source, and that this source in all probability was an official journal of the campaign kept by an officer of the general staff at headquarters. Julian's march as far as Hierapolis is the subject of a special study by Franz Cumont, "*La Marche de l'Empereur Julien d'Antioche à l'Euphrate*" in *Etudes Syriennes*, pp. 1-33.

massacres of the civilian populations in places taken by storm. At the best, towns when surrendered were ruthlessly sacked, and such of the inhabitants who were fortunate enough to escape with their lives were transported *en masse* into Roman territory. On one occasion an ambuscade of Persians discovered in a cave were smothered alive by fire kindled at its mouth. The elements, whether acting on their own or harnessed by the enemy, seem to have contributed in no small degree to the difficulties and trials of the invaders. We have accounts of fearsome swirling dust-typhoons, of a violent thunderstorm with death-dealing levin-bolts, of a sudden gale that played havoc among the tents, of anxious nights spent in baffling mist, of an unexpected inundation of the Tigris caused by crafty Persian manipulation of the sluices. But the story is not all one of stress and hardship. There are pleasant days spent among vineyards and date groves—concerning which last tree our honest Ammian has some truly marvellous botanical knowledge to impart. We are told also of an exciting deer hunt through the streets of a deserted town, and of a grand day's sport obtained in a spacious and magnificent Persian game-park. Ammian has a keen eye for the sights of the country, and, like most writers of the age, he exhibits a strong antiquarian *penchant*. Thus he tells us about some old Assyrian fortifications which he saw, about the tomb of the Emperor Gordian III (assassinated at Circesium in 244), and about a tribunal erected by Trajan that was found in an abandoned town. Then there is a note upon a Persian palace, beautifully situated amid a cypress wood, its walls adorned with painted hunting scenes: for in that country, observes Ammian, nothing is ever portrayed, in painting or in sculpture, save war or the chase—killing in one form or another. We read with interest how another palace was found, built after the Roman manner, a fact which pleased the soldiery so much that they left it unharmed. Among his motley host Julian has trouble sometimes with discipline, and there are cases of cowardice sternly punished. A whole cohort of faint-hearted cavalry are degraded to serve with the foot, "a place of more pain and less reputation"—so far have ideas of warfare changed since the days when the legionary was the backbone of a Roman army. At another time a troop which had failed in a crisis is ordered to march with the baggage and the prisoners. Sharper

measures were sometimes employed: ten soldiers who ran away during an assault were sentenced to death; and Libanius tells us of a man who was executed for drunkenness. Omens and prodigies, needless to say, bulk large in Ammian's pages, though his hero seems to have had a comfortable capacity for ignoring such warnings when they failed to square with his purpose. Perhaps the most delightful episode in the whole absorbing narrative is the account of the finding, in a captured town, of a Roman veteran who had been left behind sick during the campaign of Galerius, sixty-six years previously: he had settled down among the Persians, had taken to himself "many wives," according to the custom of the country, and was now surrounded by a numerous and thriving progeny—but ever he had clung to the wistful hope that he might be able to die at last on Roman soil. One hopes that the staunch old soldier found his way safely back to the Empire: and one would give much to know what may have been his impressions of the changes in its society, its faith and its polity during his long expatriation.

On 5th March, 363, Julian quitted Antioch. "I shake from my shoes," he said, "the dust of a city full of all wickednesses, insolence, drunkenness, incontinence, impiety, avarice, and shamelessness!"[1] On the 9th he had reached his advanced base at Hierapolis. From this place next day he wrote a long and bright letter to Libanius, whom he had recently elevated to the rank of Quaestor. This is the last letter of Julian which has survived. It is one of his most pleasing compositions, and one so richly illuminative of his eager preoccupations, his hopes and his disappointments, at this period when his meteoric career was moving swiftly to its tragic end, that I make no apology for quoting the letter in its entirety.[2]

"I travelled as far as Litarbae, a village of Chalcis. The road, I may say, was partly swamp, partly hill, but the whole of it was rough going, and in the swamp lay stones which looked as if they had been thrown in purposely, lying together without any sort of arrangement, just like city streets of the kind in which instead of cement the stones are laid close together in a layer of soil. When I had passed over this with some difficulty and arrived at my first halting place, it was about the ninth hour, and then I received at my headquarters the greater

[1] See Libanius, *Embassy to Julian*, § 55.

[2] Wright, Vol. III, pp. 200-8.

part of your Senate.[1] You will have learned already what we said to one another; and if it be the will of heaven, you shall hear it all from my own lips.

"From Litarbae I proceeded to Beroea, where Zeus by a sign from heaven declared all things to be auspicious. I stayed there a day, saw the Acropolis, and sacrificed to Zeus a white bull, as beseems an Emperor. Also I had a short talk with the Senate about the worship of the Gods. They all applauded my arguments, but very few were converted by them; and these few were men who, even before I spoke, seemed to me to hold sound views. But they were cautious and reticent, as though afraid to speak out. For it is the prevailing habit of mankind, O ye Gods, to blush for their noble qualities, such as manliness of soul and piety, and to pride themselves on what is most depraved, such as sacrilege and weakness in mind and body!

"Next Batnae entertained me, a place like nothing I have ever seen in your country except Daphne: which indeed in its present state is very like Batnae, though but a little while ago, before the temple and statue were destroyed, I should not have hesitated to compare Daphne with Ossa and Pelion or the peaks of Olympus, or Thessalian Tempe, or even to have preferred it to all of them put together. But you have composed an oration on Daphne such as no other man of our times could achieve, and I think not very many of the ancients either. Why then should I try to write about it now, when so brilliant a lament has been composed in its honour?[2] Would that none had been needed! But to return to Batnae. Its name is barbarous, but the place is Hellenic; I say so because through all the country round about the fragrance of incense arose on every side and I saw everywhere victims ready for sacrifice. But though this gave me very great pleasure, nevertheless it seemed to me overdone, and lacking in real reverence. For sacred and holy things ought to be kept away from the beaten track and performed in peace and quiet, so that men may resort thither to that end alone, and not on the way to some other business. But I may be able ere long to give due attention to this matter.

"Batnae I found to be a thickly wooded plain containing groves of young cypresses; and among these there was no old or decaying trunk, but all alike were in vigorous leafage. The Imperial lodging is the reverse of sumptuous, for it is made only of clay and logs, and undecorated; but its garden, if inferior to that of Alcinous, is comparable to the garden of Laertes. In it is a quite small grove of cypress, and along the wall many trees of this species have been planted in a row. Then in the middle are vegetable beds and all sorts of fruit trees. What did I do there, you ask? I sacrificed in the evening, and again at dawn, as I am in the habit of doing practically every day. The omens were favourable, and so we continued our march to

[1]The Senate of Antioch had sent a deputation after Julian to apologise for the rude behaviour of their townsfolk.

[2]An allusion to the Monody, still extant, which was composed by Libanius on the burnt temple at Daphne.

Hierapolis, where the inhabitants came out to meet us. Here I am the guest of a friend who, though I have only now met him for the first time, has long been very dear to me. I know that you are quite well aware why, but for all that it is a pleasure to tell you. Sopater, the pupil of the godlike Jamblichus, was a relative by marriage of this Sopater with whom I am now staying. But there is another more powerful reason even than this. Though he frequently entertained my cousin and my half-brother,[1] and was often urged by them (as you can imagine) to abandon his piety towards the Gods, despite all pressure he was not infected with the prevailing disease.

"Thus much, then, I am able to write to you from Hierapolis about my own doings. But in regard to matters military and diplomatic, you would need to be here to see them for yourself, for these affairs are too long for a letter: in fact, the business is so vast that if one were to set it forth in detail it would require a document three times as long as this. But I will give you a summary, as briefly as possible. I despatched an embassy to the Saracens inviting them to join me. I have sent out alert patrols so that no deserter may convey news of my movements to the enemy. Then I held a court-martial, and, I think, combined in my sentence mercy with justice. I have procured excellent horses and mules, and have drawn my whole army to a head. The river flotilla is laden with corn, or rather with baked bread and sour wine. You can understand at what length I should have to write if I were to describe how every detail of these arrangements was worked out, and what discussions arose over each of them. As for the number of letters and papers I have signed—they follow me everywhere like my shadow!"

Large depots had been established along the road from Hierapolis towards Nisibis, in order to give the impression that the main attack would be by the Tigris; and thitherward in fact the heads of Julian's columns seemed at first to point. But at Carrhae—place of ill-omen—the *ensemble* on 25th March wheeled to the right, and descending the River Bilechas struck the Euphrates at Callinicum (27th). Here it was joined by a proud armada of 50 warships and 1,000 transports, under the admirals Lucilian and Constantian, with complete pontoon and siege trains. By land and water it was probably the most formidable armament that the west hurled against the east from the days of Alexander to those of Heraclius. The boundary between the two Empires was formed by the river Chaboras. At the frontier fortress of Circesium, on 5th April, 363, Julian's mighty host, in column of route extending for a length of nearly ten miles, crossed the river by

[1]Constantius and Gallus.

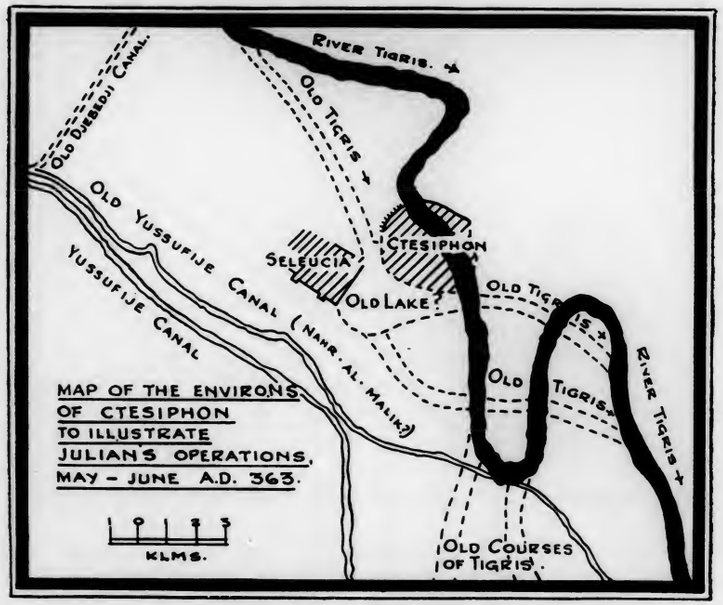
a pontoon bridge and passed into hostile territory. The great adventure had begun.

In the face of so formidable a thrust the Persian Viceroy of Mesopotamia had withdrawn his field armies, and had destroyed the roads and drowned the low country by opening the flood-gates of the numerous canals which connected the Euphrates and the Tigris. But the energy and resource of Julian overcame every impediment. With the exception of one sharp brush with an enemy column near Macepracta, the only serious resistance to his masterful onrush was offered by the walled cities of Pirisabora and Maiozamalcha. Of these, the former, the second largest town in Assyria, was stormed (26th April) in a couple of days of intense fighting, when a battering ram had breached an angle tower of the wall; for two more days the citadel prolonged a desperate resistance until Julian brought up a Helepolis, or movable wooden tower of attack—whereupon the gallant commander, Mamersides, letting himself down from the battlements by a rope, obtained a parley with the Emperor, and in the result surrendered the place on terms, with 2,500 prisoners, soldiers and civilians, and a large quantity of munitions and stores. The other city, Maiozamalcha, likewise a place of great size and strength, built on a rocky site, after an obstinate resistance was carried by a mine driven under its double cincture of defence, armed with sixteen towers and a deep outer fosse. "Julian might sooner storm the palace of Zeus than Maiozamalcha,"[1] its garrison had vaunted. In the heat of the Roman inrush, despite Julian's stringent orders a deplorable massacre took place, in which neither age nor sex was spared. "Now at last we have provided friend Libanius with the theme for an oration," cried the Emperor exultantly, when this strong fortress had been captured:—but the next oration which the sophist of Antioch was to prepare would be his touching Threnody on Julian's death.

Throughout the two sieges the Emperor, *audax plus quam imperatorem decet*,[2] had personally displayed the most reckless valour, of which one instance, during the reconnaissance of Maiozamalcha, may be quoted in full from the vivid narrative of Ammian. "Guarded

[1] Zosimus, Bk. III, Chap. xxii.
[2] Victor, *Epitome*, Chap. xliii.

PLATE V.



THE ENVIRONS OF CTESIPHON.

(Based, by permission, on Oscar Reuther's Map in Antiquity, December, 1929, p. 435.)

with some few light appointed skirmishers, being himself also on foot, minding diligently to search and view the situation of the city, he happened to plunge himself headlong into a mischievous ambuscado, and escaped in the end the utmost danger of his life. For at a blind and secret gate of the town there went out ten Persians armed, who passing closely on their knees under the bottom of the cliffs, suddenly with great violence charged upon our men; and two of them espying the Emperor himself (as he was evident to be seen and known by his rich apparel) with their drawn swords laid at him. But by lifting up his broad shield he warded the blows, and under the sure fence thereof, himself in a brave and bold resolution ran one of them with his sword into the side; and the other after many a stroke and wound given, was slain by his guard aforesaid. The rest (whereof some were hurt) ran away. And so, after he had disarmed and divested those twain, he brought back his companions in safety, returned with their spoils unto the camp, and was with great joy of them all received."[1]

Towards the end of May, "the Thunderbolt," as the Persians called Julian, after more than three hundred miles of incessant marching and fighting, found himself within striking range of Ctesiphon, the capital of Mesopotamia, situated on the Tigris—"the centre of Sassanid royal power, which opposed the Hellenism of the west with all the oriential traditions of the ancient Iranian kingdom."[2] His army was encamped at a place called Sabatha, near the ruins of Seleucia (destroyed by the Romans in 165 A.D.), while the fleet rode at anchor in the waters of the Naharmalcha (Nahr-al-malik), a canal uniting the Euphrates with the Tigris. A fort which dominated the canal was stormed after a short but obstinate resistance, Julian once again fighting with the utmost personal heroism in the vanguard of the assaulting columns. But now a most serious obstacle to his further progress made itself apparent. The Naharmalcha canal entered the Tigris about nine miles below Ctesiphon, and the Roman fleet would thus have required to be impelled up stream for the attack on the Persian capital. The

[1]Ammian, Bk. XXIV, Chap. iv, 3-4; Holland, pp. 247-8.

[2]Oscar Reuther, "The German Excavations at Ctesiphon" in *Antiquity*, December, 1929, p. 434. These excavations are likely, in course of time, to shed material light on Julian's operations.

inexhaustible resource and fiery ardour of Julian solved the difficulty. Well read in history, he knew that, two and a half centuries before, Trajan had constructed a switch-canal, thirty stades in length,[1] which branched off to the left from the Naharmalcha and entered the Tigris *above* Ctesiphon. It had long been filled up, but from information furnished by prisoners Julian located its course, and with incredible labour his eager pioneers cleared it out so as to make it navigable again. To the astonishment and terror of the Persians, the entire Roman fleet, sailing proudly along the new channel, dropped into the Tigris above Ctesiphon. The Persian capital being situated on the opposite bank of the river, it now became necessary to transport the Roman army across the Tigris. The current was broad and swift, the opposite bank was steep and palisaded, and strongly held. Julian, scorning the timid doubts of his staff, rose to the crisis in what La Bléterie has not unjustly termed "*une des manœuvres les plus hardies de l'antiquité.*"[2] Secretly manning five vessels with a forlorn hope of four hundred shock-troops, he sent them one night across the mighty river right into the teeth of a watchful enemy. They disappeared into the darkness and the silence. Soon a burst of flame on the opposite shore revealed to the anxious Emperor that the Persians had fired the ships. With that ready resource that marks the great captain—"see the appointed signal, they are safely landed," cried Julian; "let us hasten after them!" Flinging himself into the nearest boat, he was followed in a kind of delirious enthusiasm by his men. After a twelve hours' doubtful struggle on the slippery bank (battle of Ctesiphon, 27th May, 363), the Persians—foot, horse, iron-towered elephants, and all—were utterly routed with heavy loss, and pursued in disorder to the walls of Ctesiphon. The brusque attack had won. Two days later Julian's whole army passed the Tigris, and pitched its camp at the fort of Abuzatha. All now seemed ready for the siege of Ctesiphon.

But at this moment begins the tragedy. Beneath his outward triumph it would seem that a terrible psychological change was clouding the soul of the young Emperor. "The sands were beginning to slip beneath his feet." For all his brilliant victories his heart was

[1]Possibly the old Djebedji Canal. See Map, Plate V.
[2]*Op. cit.*, p. 296.

sore within him at the utter failure of his greatest aim in life. He felt himself deserted by the Gods for whom he had thought and wrought and suffered so much, and amid all the earnings of his pain his passionate soul uprose in bitter protest against his own Olympians. Ammian tells us what is surely a very significant story of how after the battle of Ctesiphon, when the auguries were found unfavourable, the Emperor cried aloud in wrath to Heaven that never more would he sacrifice to Mars who thus scurvily refused him the assurance of success. It is clear that the iron had entered into Julian's soul; and when disillusionment comes to a man of his age and temper, its consequences are indeed fearful to behold. Doubtless the state of mental aberration of which we thus obtain a flashlight glimpse explains the extraordinary conduct of Julian after the passage of the Tigris. Certainly the siege of Ctesiphon was an arduous and a doubtful undertaking,[1] particularly as there was still no sign of the northern army under Procopius and Sebastian. But the Roman troops, animated by their heroic Emperor, had hitherto spurned every obstacle: and in any case, to abandon the project was nothing else than to confess defeat. At this crisis ambassadors appeared from the Persian monarch offering fair terms of peace. "Shahpur, King of Kings, Partner of the Stars, Brother of the Sun and Moon,"[2] was deeply bowed by Julian's powerful and obstinate attack. He took his food upon the floor, and his disordered robes and unkempt hair portrayed the anguish of his soul. The proud eastern despot, writhing with mingled rage and shame, humbled himself to crave a treaty from the Roman Emperor. The terms offered were highly favourable, and Julian would assuredly have done well to accept them. It is worth noting that Socrates ascribes to the influence of

[1]The formidable nature of the Sassanid wall, as revealed by excavation, is thus described by Reuther, *op. cit.*, p. 451. "It is built of sun dried bricks, mortared with clay, about 10 metres thick and set with semi-circular turrets, 9.30 metres in breadth and projecting for the same distance. The curtains are 38 metres long. Both turrets and curtains are divided in their upper portions by flat niches sunk between broad pillars, probably closed by arches and thus forming a blind arcade. Beneath this row of niches there is a scarp sloping steeply in the foreground, made of piled up earth and strengthened by a layer of sun dried bricks. We could not ascertain if there was a fosse." That this wall existed in Julian's time it is not possible meantime to say. With the exception of a Parthian cemetery, most of the remains and relics hitherto discovered by the German expedition seem to be not earlier than the sixth century.

[2]*Particeps siderum, frater solis et lunae*—Ammian, Bk. XVII, Chap. v, 3.

Maximus the blame of the Emperor's headstrong refusal even to consider King Shahpur's proposals. Did we know more, we should probably recognise in this wary schemer the evil genius of Julian's career.

At all events the facts are not in dispute. Instead of concluding an honourable peace upon conditions advantageously offered, the Emperor, daring Gods and men, determined to stake all in one last bold gamble against Fate. His final hope, it seems, was flat despair. In a fit of dare-devil resolution he burned at Abuzatha the whole of his great fleet with all its vast stores,[1] saving only the pontoons, and on 3rd June struck out eastward into the open country to find his enemy. But no enemy appeared, and soon Julian experienced the fearful consequences of his own rashness. Yet in this last supreme crisis his magnificent leadership and indomitable courage mounted to a triumphant height. Possibly he felt his life was done. The silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl was broken. Gods and men were in league against him, and there remained nothing but the ultimate and highest solace of a glorious death at the head of his legions. Every other thought and hope were now cast aside, and we see only a proud and angry spirit, at war with its own Gods. Fate was come into the list, and had championed him to the utterance: so now he would defy the stars. In these terrible closing days of his stormy life, *Iulianus contra mundum* scales a pinnacle of tragic grandeur; and, from that height of lone achievement his figure, at once so grand and so pathetic, has haunted and fascinated mankind ever since. Amid all the devoted heroism and the splendid misery of those final scenes that thought of the poet may well have found a secret utterance in his breaking heart:—

> "I have touched the highest point of all my greatness;
> And from that full meridian of my glory
> I haste now to my setting: I shall fall
> Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
> And no man see me more."

[1]For a good criticism of this much discussed action see A. Kellerbauer, *Kaiser Julians Regierung*, p. 33, footnote. This writer attempts, not without a measure of success, to trace something of method in the Emperor's madness: but the experienced judgment of Ammian, who knew all the circumstances, must be allowed to prevail: "*hoc casu classe cum non oporteret abolita*," Bk. XXIV, Chap. vii, 6.

One slender chance alone was left: to struggle northward in the desperate hope of meeting Procopius and Sebastian. This plan was adopted on the evening of 15th June. Fearful now became the sufferings of the retreating host: hunger, thirst, choking dust and scorching heat, a devastated countryside, a plague of noxious insects; and to crown all the Persians, worst gadflies of all, at length appeared in force and began to harry the far-flung Roman columns. Julian was everywhere. In front, on the flanks, in rear—

> *"Nihil in tanto circum terrore locutus*
> *Indignum Latio"*

—he encouraged his fainting soldiers by his fiery example, sharing all their toil and suffering, and exposing himself recklessly to every danger. Content with a daily dish of porridge, he made over the Imperial provisions to the rank and file of his comrades. "And verily the Emperor, for whom there were provided no dainty cates as kings use to have, but for his light supper, which he was to take under the little pillars of a tent or hole, a small pittance of thick gruel (which a very common and base drudging soldier would disdain to eat) look whatsoever was made ready for his service, careless of himself, distributed and sent it away among the poor and needy soldiers."[1] Once again, on 22nd June, it came to a decisive trial of strength between the two armies, and once again the adamantine will and military genius of the great captain achieved an overwhelming triumph. The battle of Maranga was Julian's last victory. In a rear-guard action on 26th June, at a place called Phrygia, rushing—unarmed and attended only by his orderly—to the assistance of an embarrassed column, he was struck in the side by a javelin that pierced his liver. For sheer savage gruesomeness the triumphant comment of the Christian apologist Gregory is hard to match—even in the literature of religious controversy:—"the concluding reflection is for once very appropriate—the liver of the victim was the appointed means of reading the future, and it was precisely in that organ that the arch-diviner received the fatal thrust!"[2]

Christian legend has asserted that as the wounded Apostate fell from his steed a cry of bitterest agony was wrung from him, expressing

[1]Ammian, Bk. XXV, Chap. ii, 2; Holland, pp. 262-3.
[2]*Second Invective*, Chap. xiv: King, p. 97.

the sense of utter failure in his life. If not true, the story is at least well-invented: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean"—that cry of mortal anguish has sounded down the aisles of time as the verdict of history upon Julian's career.

That night in the Imperial tent, amid the hushed camp under the vast silence of the eastern stars, the closing scene in the strange tragedy of the Apostate was enacted. In his last hours the Roman triumphed over the Greek in that curiously mingled personality: like his pattern Marcus Aurelius, he had taken up the post of duty not with any enthusiasm, but with a clear-eyed consciousness of high responsibility; and now he gladly accepted the summons of recall. He could feel with comfort that his life had been offered in the sacred cause of Rome, even as Curtius, Scaevola and the Decii had given theirs in the brave days of old. He went "with a good hope,"[1] as his patron the Sun God had promised that he should go. In a few noble and touching words the dying Emperor, strong in suffering as he had ever shown himself to be, took leave of his grief-stricken marshals. When asked to name his successor he forbore; and his refusal to nominate a pagan shows, perhaps, that in the hard dry clarity of those final moments he realised indeed that his life's work had been in vain. What that realisation meant to him, we may only guess, but shall never know. For the rest, his conscience was void of offence. He died without remorse, as he knew that he had lived without guilt, and only thanked the Eternal God-head, Who had thus accorded him a death worthy of a philosopher and of a Roman Emperor. In the full course of his triumphant career he felt that he had earned so glorious a release from this world: "*in medio cursu florentium gloriarum hunc merui clarum e mundo digressum*"[2]—"these words go through you like a clang of steel," as Carlyle exclaimed of a passage, not dissimilar in its context, from the epitaph of Marshal Keith. Having thus taken leave of his staff, Julian spent his latest moments conversing tranquilly with his philosopher friends upon the immortality of the soul. About midnight (26th-27th June, 363) his wound broke out afresh; his breathing became laboured; he called for a cup of cold water. Another moment, and King Helios had claimed

[1] *Caesars*, Wright, Vol. III, p. 414.
[2] Ammian, Bk. XXV, Chap. iii, 19.

his votary. In the bosom of the Supreme Principle of its yearnings the great, passionate, heroic, unresting, so strangely misguided spirit at last found the peace that it had never known on earth.

"How died he? Death to life is crown or shame.
* * * * * * *
Nothing is here for tears; nothing to wail,
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

Thus died Julian, after a reign of less than nineteen months, and in the thirty-second year of his age. Apostate though he was, we may not doubt that the great Angel of the Agony would be at hand before the Throne to plead with the Almighty for the sake of all that was so gallant and generous in that self-tormented soul. And if any misgiving should linger on the subject, there exists the emphatic authority of Cicero, that for all who have rescued their country, or sprung to her help in her bitterest need, are prepared an assured place and eternal happiness in heaven.[1]

At this untimely end of so dazzling a career in arms, it may be not improper to subjoin the considered judgment which has been passed upon Julian's military exploits by one of his ablest and most thorough German biographers, who made a special study of his campaigns.[2] Quite probably the estimate herein given of Julian's place among the great captains of history may be an exaggerated one: but the psychological analysis of the young student-dreamer's suddenly evidenced *flair* for war is certainly full of suggestive interest.

"Without any doubt Julian was one of the greatest soldiers that the world has known. He must be accounted a doubly remarkable phenomenon, because in him we see a young man whose mind had hitherto been occupied with anything rather than military matters, but who quite suddenly and unexpectedly developed an uncommon talent for war, and accomplished heroic deeds of arms that filled the whole world with astonishment.

"If we look into the early lives of great captains, we find that there are many who from boyhood revealed their love of soldiering; so that even before, as mere striplings, they entered a military school or were drafted into a unit, their choice of warlike games had made no

[1] *Somnium Scipionis*, Chap. iii, 1.
[2] Mücke, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 96-9.

mystery about their bent of mind. In the case of many another celebrated general, we learn how those who guided his youth, although wholly in ignorance of the military gifts latent in the child, yet chose for him a career in the army, and with the aid of all manner of external stimulants, such as giving him toy weapons to play with, strove to arouse in his mind a hankering for the profession of war. But history shows us not only cases of famous soldiers in whom the love of arms was fostered or awakened by the circumstances of their upbringing: there are instances also of gifted commanders, imbued from boyhood with so decided a passion for a military career, that in the teeth of the gravest obstacles they have forced a way to the recognition of their talent. Sometimes we even see how an inborn genius for war has actually been strengthened by such early difficulties or opposition, so that by the time the youth has reached manhood only an opportunity is needed for his capacity to unfold itself before an astounded world.

"The case of Julian is quite different from all these. From his cradle an object of suspicion, in him the development of natural gifts, in so far as in a military or political sense they were likely to prove dangerous, was deliberately repressed: with the result that he reached full manhood without displaying the slightest inclination towards the profession of arms. Brought up in the jealously guarded seclusion of a lonely mountain *château* in Cappadocia, early introduced to the study of the New Testament, and removed from all active occupation by a steady round of monkish devotions; the first independent workings of his mind impelled him to steep himself in philosophical enquiries and in the glories of the old Hellenic literature. As a result he is assailed by painful religious and intellectual doubts; then he has a narrow escape from destruction, and is only too glad to be allowed at last to devote himself wholly to a scholar's life. Suddenly recalled from his chosen pursuits, he is plunged forthwith into affairs of State; and, with hardly time to doff his scholar's gown, he is sent as viceroy, at the head of utterly inadequate forces, to rescue an invaded province which experienced captains have given up for lost. And lo! suddenly he blazes forth even as a brilliant meteor lights up the heavens, blinding the whole world, alike of his contemporaries and of all futurity, with the dazzle of his glory; and like a meteor vanishes—yet not as a fallen Titan who has outlived his fame, but victoriously in face of the enemy, and in battle for his country rescued by his heroism on a hundred stricken fields.

"A contradiction seems to lie in this sudden exchange by Julian of his chosen occupation for another which he regarded not merely with unfamiliarity, but also with downright aversion; a transference from the battles of the sophists and the theologians to those conducted sword in hand, from the classroom of the Academy to the camp filled with the din of arms. It is this apparent contradiction which fascinates us and provokes our admiration for the transcendent genius of the man. We stand here in the presence of a psychological riddle, which can be resolved only when we have taken the measure of his many-sided gifts. The keen intellect and clarity of vision already displayed in the field of philosophical and religious disputation soon made themselves equally apparent on the field of battle, and taught him the qualities upon which

success here also would depend: a resolute will, ability to profit by the experience of others, calmness in reflection, rapidity in decision, and tenacity in execution. So far as technical equipment was concerned, zeal, love of glory, and patriotism would soon make up what he lacked in that respect. The same tactical methods which had gained him many a victory in the battles of wits would now be employed to win him laurels on the stricken field: ability to conceal his own weakness, to search out the chinks in his adversary's armour, to thrust against these with the full weight of his intellectual superiority, to extract profit from the lessons taught him by his enemy, and thus to pay him back in his own coin. Schooled in this wise Julian, in a manner that evoked the admiration of the world, conducted upon two continents campaigns which his predecessor had bequeathed to him in a truly deplorable state, like old-standing cancerous growths preying upon the vitals of the Empire. And think what he might have accomplished if from the outset he had enjoyed complete command over the resources of the whole Empire! Instead of that, as Caesar in Gaul he was kept in leading strings by Constantius to such a degree that he was actually expected to abide by the *menus* written out for his meals in his cousin's own hand!—not to speak of the difficulties placed in his way by all manner of secret enemies and spies sent to dog his movements.

"But what is most remarkable in Julian's military career is not so much this or that particular victory, as the extraordinary boldness and speed of his incomparable march from the Rhine to the Tigris—for the few months' halt at Constantinople must be regarded purely as an interruption forced upon him by the altered military and political situation. The enormous distance of 2,500 miles from one end of the Roman Empire to the other, particularly when we remember the means of communication available in those days, is a fact which speaks volumes for Julian's spirit of enterprise. Such a project could be undertaken only by a commander who placed absolute reliance on himself and on those whom he led, a reliance based on their mutual confidence proved and established in many a hard won glorious victory. His great march was begun to maintain his just rights and to defend himself and his army in civil conflict against a treacherous foe. Where the collision would take place, in Asia or in Europe, he could not foretell; but he marched prepared for anything, to do battle against whatever foe appeared in whatever quarter. The death of Constantius prevented the civil war and gave the army of Julian an unforseen objective in Mesopotamia—there on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris to join in battle with the Empire's most formidable foes. From this also Julian did not flinch: and how equal to the task he proved himself was acknowledged by his incompetent successor in the Homeric verse selected for his epitaph:—

'Julian, who fell near Tigris rapid wave
In arms and virtue great, here finds a grave.' "[1]

[1] Ἰουλιανὸς μετὰ Τίγριν ἀγάρροον ἐνθάδε κεῖται
ἀμφότερον βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθὸς κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής.

The second line is Homer, *Iliad*, Bk. III, v. 179. A longer version is given by Zonaras, *Annals*, Bk. XIII, Chap. 13.

There is no need for us to follow the remnants of the Roman army in their pitiful retreat, nor must we stop to voice our wrath at the dastard sacrifice, *"indignum imperio facinus,"* of five fair provinces—including the great fortress and commercial *entrepôt* of Nisibis, *"Orientis firmissimum claustrum"*—by which the miserable whelk Jovian, Julian's Christian successor, sordidly bought an ignoble peace (Treaty of Dura, 12th July, 362). Ten times over we should have fought it out, cries the soldierly Ammian[1] in bitterness of heart. These were the provinces ceded by Persia to Rome as a result of the victorious campaign of Galerius in 297. In the half century they had become thoroughly Roman in culture and sympathy: in the reign of Constantius, Nisibis had thrice successfully resisted a Persian siege. The worst feature of this disastrous peace was the abandonment of Rome's faithful ally, the "protected" Christian State of Armenia, whose King Arsaces in the result found a lingering end at the hands of the implacable Shahpur. And so, with Jovian, his thoughts on wine and women bent, shamefully shambling away—amid the bitter taunts and curses of the Nisibenes—to find a death more paltry than his life, the curtain is rung strangely down upon Julian's heroic venture. No wonder that Ammian interrupts the sober course of his narrative by a heartfelt outburst against Fortune, who had played the Roman Empire such a sorry trick!

When the news arrived that the cursed Apostate had been struck down by divine justice in the midst of his impious career, the skies were rent with a screech of savage glee from almost the whole Christian world. Leading churchman like Gregory of Nazianzus vied with each other in loading the memory of the fallen Emperor with every form of exsputory abuse. "That dragon, that Apostate, that Assyrian, the public and private enemy of the human race"—the scream of triumph shows how deep had been their terror. "Where are now your sacrifices, your ceremonies, your mysteries?" cries Gregory in a very ecstasy of joy. "Where are your victims, public and secret, and your highly lauded art of divination by entrails? Where is your jugglery in prediction; where are your miracles of familiar spirits? Where is glorious Babylon, so much talked of, and the whole world brought

[1]Bk. XXV, Chap. vii, 10. For the Treaty and its consequences see N. H. Baynes in *English Historical Review*, Vol. XXV, pp. 634 *sqq.*

before your view? Where are the Persians and the Medes already grasped in your hands?" In such wise, in the fourth century, could a citizen of the Roman Empire, blinded by bigotry and malice, exult over the triumph of Rome's antagonists: the Persians, we are assured, were the divinely appointed chastisers of Julian's impious frenzy. "Where are the Gods," continues Gregory, "whom you followed in procession, and who accompanied your march? Where are all your threats against us Christians, whom you had resolved to exterminate? All are vanished; all have been falsified; all have melted away. The boastings of the impious have turned out a dream!" It is but just to the impassioned controversialist to note that he concludes his thunderous invective upon a softer and a nobler key, which expresses all that is best in the faith against whose rock-like strength the dead Emperor had been broken. "Let us not abuse our power; let us not be bitter towards those who have done us wrong; let us not do the very things which we have censured in others, but let us detest every thought of retaliation. Let us show our enemies that even as Christ gloried in His sufferings, so also He was not less superior in what He refrained from doing, though He had the power. Let us render unto God our thanksgiving; let us magnify the mystery by our goodness, and to this end let us improve the occasion."

But while his deluded followers might thus be dealt with on the score of Christian charity, for the Apostate himself there could in the hereafter be no hope of mercy. "Turn, pray," cries the Christian protagonist to the trembling pagans, "turn to your own stories, to your Pyriphlegethons, Cocyti, and Acherons, wherewith wickedness such as that of Tantalus, Tityus, or Ixion is punished. Julian shall be reckoned your king of this fraternity—yea, at the head of them all! Though he be not tortured with thirst whilst up to his chin in a lake; nor fearing the rock overhanging his head, ever pushed away, ever rolling back; nor revolving on the whirling wheel; nor torn by vultures, never being consumed, but endlessly renewed — whether all this be truth, or but an allegory of the truth, we shall see with what torture he will be punished, and how much more utterly than all the rest!"[1] It is not the Christian God upon whom Gregory calls in his

[1]Gregory, *Second Invective*, Chaps. xxxvi-viii: King, pp. 115-8.

impassioned declamation; it is the Old Testament God of Vengeance, the terrible *Deus Ultionum* of the Psalmist.

Not every Christian so thought or spoke about Julian. Amid all this spume and surge of triumphant hatred against the tragic shipwreck of the Apostate, one finer mind paid its unheard tribute to the grandeur and the nobility of the man. In Gaul a generation later, where the memory of the dead Emperor's mighty deeds still lingered, the great Christian poet Prudentius enshrined in immortal verse his conviction of Julian's worth:—

"Ductor fortissimus armis
Conditor et legum: celeberrimus ore manuque;
Consultor patriae, sed non consultor habendae
Religionis: amans tercentum milia divum;
Perfidus ille Deo, quamvis non perfidus orbi."

"A captain brave, an author wise of laws,
In speech, in action, worthy of applause;
Who loved his country well, but would not love
The worship of the One True God above;
Faithless to Heaven, though faithful to the State."[1]

Among modern tributes to Julian, I have never found a nobler one than is contained in the sonorous words with which Gibbon closes his splendid account of the great Emperor's career. "The remains of Julian were interred at Tarsus in Cilicia; but his stately tomb, which arose in that city, on the banks of the cold and limpid Cydnus, was displeasing to the faithful friends who loved and revered the memory of that extraordinary man. The philosopher expressed a very reasonable wish that the disciple of Plato might have reposed amid the groves of the Academy; while the soldier exclaimed, in bolder accents, that the ashes of Julian should have been mingled with those of Caesar, in the Field of Mars, and among the ancient monuments of Roman virtue.[2] The history of princes does not very frequently renew the example of a similar competition."

[1] Prudentius, *Liber Apotheosis*, vv. 450-4; version by Sir George Younger in *Translations from Prudentius*, ed. F. St. John Thackeray, p. 113.

[2] The reference here is to a truly Roman passage of Ammian, one of the finest in all his history (Bk. XXV, Chap. x): *"cuius suprema et cineres, si qui tunc iusta consuleret, non Cydnus videre deberet, quamvis gratissimus amnis et liquidus; sed ad perpetuandam gloriam recte factorum praeterlambere Tiberis intersecans urbem aeternam, Divorum veterum monumenta praestringens."*

INDEX.

ACERENZA, bust of Julian at, 4, 27, 93.
Administration, Julian's, 37-9, 59-63.
Alexandria, 20, 76, 80.
Antioch, 23, 26, 106-108, 111.
Aquileia, 58.
Arian heresy, 6, 7, 12, 75, 76.
Armenia, 109, 124.
Arsaces, 109, 124.
Art in the 14th century, 4, 10, 93.
Asclepios, position of, in Julian's cosmogony, 70-1.
Athanasius, 80-1.
Athens, 26, 27-9, 30.
Augustine, 8, 14, 68.

BAPTISM, Julian's views on, 103-4.
Basel, 34, 51.
Basil, 82, 83.
Basilina, 17.
Batnae, 112.
Besançon, 101.
Britain, corn from, 37.

Caesars, Banquet of the, 102-4.
Chi-Rho monogram, 77.
Chnodomar, 37.
Christianity adopted by Constantine, 5-8.
— corruption of, 11-12.
— Julian's action against, 72-88, 95-6.
— policy of Theodosius regarding, 96.
Cologne, 34.
Constantia, 23, 26.
Constantine the Great, 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 22, 62, 88.
— Julian's opinion of, 56, 103-4.
Constantinople, 2, 6, 15, 17, 23, 25, 49, 50, 52, 54, 62.
Constantius II, 7, 8, 17, 18, 20, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 91, 104, 113.
— Julian's opinion of, 54, 55, 56.
— Julius, 17.
Cosmogony of Julian, 63-6.
Ctesiphon, 115-7.

DAPHNE, 90, 108.
Diocletian, 1, 3, 8, 62, 88.
Donatist schism, 6, 7, 74.

EDUCATION, Act against Christians in respect of, 81-3.
— in the 4th century, 29, 82-3.
— Julian's view of, 61.
Eleusinian mysteries, 30.
Ephesus, 24.
Eusebia, 26, 33, 44.
Eusebius, 19.

FLORENTIUS, 39, 45, 58.

GALLUS, 18, 20, 21, 23, 26, 45, 113.
George, 20, 76.
Gregory of Nazianzus, 18, 27, 82.
— his condemnation of Julian, 124-6.

HELEN, 33.
Heracles, position of, in Julian's cosmogony, 71.
Hierapolis, 111.

JERUSALEM, 88.
Jesus, Julian's travesty of, 103-4.
Jovian, 55, 124.

LABARUM, 6.
"Last Oracle," the, 97.
Letters of Julian, 100-1.
Libanius, 23, 82-3, 111, 114.
Literature in the 4th century, 4, 10, 93.

MACEDONIUS, Theodulus, and Tatianus, case of, 78-9.
Macellum, 20, 21, 22, 27.
Magic, 29-30.
Magnentius, 18, 50.
Maiozamalcha, 114.
Maranga, 119.
Marcus Aurelius, 30, 91, 102, 103, 120.
Mardonius, 19, 21.
Mark, 79-80.
Maximin Daia, 73.
Maximus, 24, 91, 118.
Milan, 7, 8, 26, 27, 30, 31.
Misopogon, 107-8.
Mithras, 11, 66, 67.
Monachism, 13.
Mopsucrene, 53.
Myths, Julian's doctrine regarding, 67-8.

NAHARMALCHA, 115.
Neoplatonism, 4, 11, 22-3, 28, 29, 64-6, 69-70, 86.
Nicaea, Council of, 6, 7.
Nicomedia, 2, 19, 23, 62.
Nish, 51, 52, 53.
Nisibis, 75, 113, 124.

ORIBASIUS, 39, 44, 47, 97.

PARIS, 42, 45, 46, 48.
Pirisabora, 114.
Plotinus, 29, 65-6.
Poems of Julian, 101-2.
Postal system, Julian's reform of, 60-1.
Prudentius on Julian, 126.

READER, office of, 20.
Rome, 1, 52.

SHAHPUR II, 117-8.
Sovereignty, Julian's conception of, 40-1.
Stoicism, 8, 102.
Strasbourg, 34, 37, 50.
Succi, Pass of, 51.

TARSUS, 53, 105, 126.
Theodosius, 7, 93, 95-6, 107-8.

URSULUS, 57.

VALENTINIAN, 94.
Vienne, 49.

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